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THE ARAHANT

Translated by John D. Ireland

如 麽 具 飲 善 願 求
 風 不 信 食 攝 三 非
 吻 能 又 知 護 乐
 石 勝 精 節 誰 住
 山 造 量 根 住



Frontispiece:
the calligraphy in Chinese
characters by Ven Thích Huyễn-Vi reads:

*Contemplating the unpleasant things,
living well controlled in his senses,
and knowing moderation in eating,
having faith, putting forth energy,
him indeed Māra does not overcome,
as the wind does not overcome a rocky mountain.*

Dhammapada I v.8 (tr. K R Norman)

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THE ARAHANT

Translated by John D. Ireland

Happy are the Perfected Ones,
In them no craving's found;
The 'I'-concept is rooted out,
Delusion's net burst through

Attained to freedom from craving,
For them the heart is pure.
They in the world are unsullied,
Become holy and free of taints.

True men worthy of praise are they,
Own sons of the Awakened One;
They wander about great heroes,
With fear and dread both gone.

Endowed with all good qualities,
Great beings calm of mind,
These in the world are chief,
In them no craving's found.

Knowing that training's completed
And this body is their last;
What is the essence of the holy life, —
For that they rely not on another.

Undisturbed by any conceit,
Freed from further becoming,
Attained the stage of self-mastery,
They are, in the world, victorious.

Above, across, below — for them
No pleasure there is found.
They delight in the Lion's roar:
The Buddhas in the world are unsurpassed!

Samyutta Nikāya XXII 76 (abbreviated)

From the author of *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*

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THE END OF THE BUDDHA'S LIFE ACCORDING TO THE EKOTTARĀGAMA

André Bareau

Only one complete Ekottarāgama, corresponding to the Pāli Āṅguttara Nikāya, has come down to us and only in its Chinese translation by Saṅghadeva and dating from 397-8. It bears the number 125 in the *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* edition. This work contains a sūtra relating the last months of the Buddha's life, from his departure from Vaiśālī up to but excluding the moment of the Parinirvāna, and which hence partially corresponds to the Mahāparinibbānasutta. We should remember that this Ekottarāgama is of unknown origin and that several hypotheses have been proposed as to the school to which it belonged, the most likely being one of those emanating from the Mahāsāṃghikas without being able to be more precise.

We give here a full translation of this sūtra, then a study of it based on a comparison with several parallel texts, particularly the six extant versions of the Mahāparinirvānasūtra, one in Pāli and well-known, another in Sanskrit edited by Ernst Waldschmidt and four which have come down to us only in Chinese translation.

* * *

1) (748c) Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was in Vaiśālī, in Āmrapāli's Park, with a great company of monks numbering five hundred. Gradually, while dwelling among men, he travelled around in order to win them over.

At that moment, the Blessed Lord turned round and looked at the town of Vaiśālī. Suddenly, he uttered this verse (*gāthā*):

(749a) 'I am now looking at Vaiśālī, for I shall not see it again and I shall not enter it again. Henceforth, I shall leave it and depart.'

2) Then, in the town of Vaiśālī, the people, having heard that verse, were greatly saddened. They followed the Blessed Lord, each shedding tears, and said to each other: 'The complete

cessation of the Tathāgata will occur shortly. The world will lose its radiant light'. The Blessed Lord said to them: 'Stop (*alam*)! Stop! O men, do not be so greatly saddened. Phenomena are destructible; to wish to do something so that they are not destroyed is totally unreasonable. I have taught you four things the reality of which you have noted, and the Community of the four classes has also given this teaching on four things. Which are those four? All formations (*samskāra*) are impermanent (*anitya*), that is the first dharma. All formations are painful (*duhkha*), that is the second dharma. All formations are impersonal (*anātmaka*), that is the third dharma. Nirvāna is their cessation (*nirodha*), that is the fourth dharma. Such is the origin. In a short time, the Tathāgata will attain complete cessation. Know the origin of those four dharmas and explain their meaning (*artha*) to all living beings (*sattva*).

3) At that moment, the Blessed Lord wished to act so that the people from the town of Vaiśālī returned to their homes. Immediately, he supernormally created a great trench, and the Tathagāta, at the head of the company of monks, stood on one of its banks, while the local people were on the other bank. Then, the Blessed Lord threw his own alms-bowl (*pātra*) into space and gave it to those people, saying to them: 'Make some good offerings to that bowl, also make offerings to Dharma masters with eminent talents, and you will obtain immense happiness for a long time'. As soon as the Blessed Lord had made a gift of his bowl, he set out for Kuśinagara country.

4) At that moment, the people of Kuśinagara country were assembled in one place, in all more than five hundred Mallas, and they conversed thus: 'Let us all do an extraordinary thing together, so that after the end of our life our renown will spread far and our children and grandchildren will transmit it. Formerly, the Mallas of Kuśinagara had unequalled strength'. Immediately, they reflected as follows: 'What meritorious action can we perform?'

There was then, not far from the town of Kuśinagara, a large oblong stone, one hundred and twenty paces long and sixty paces wide. 'All together, let us raise it upright!' they said. They used all

their strength in trying to get it upright, but they were unable to do so or even get it to move, let alone lift it.

At that moment the Blessed Lord, having reached them, said to them: 'O young people, what are you wanting to do?' The young people said to the Buddha: 'Our intention was, having discussed it, to raise this stone so that, from one generation to another, our renown will be transmitted. We have spared no effort (749b) for seven days, but we have been unable to do anything so that the stone will rise or move'. The Buddha said to the young people: 'Sires, would you like the Tathāgata to raise that stone upright?' The young people answered: 'At present, it is just the moment when we wish only that the Buddha would place that stone appropriately'.

Instantly, the Buddha rubbed the stone with his right hand, then, having raised it and placed it in his left hand, he threw it into space and the stone reached the Brahma heaven. Thereupon, the Mallas of Kuśinagara, not seeing the stone any more, said to the Blessed Lord: 'Where has that stone gone now, we do not see it any more?' The Blessed Lord told them: 'That stone has now reached the Brahma heaven'. The young people said to the Buddha: 'When will that stone come to Jambudvīpa?' The Blessed Lord said to them: 'At present I shall tell you a simile, for the wise explain by means of similes. If a man were to go to the Brahma heaven, if he were to take that stone and throw it onto Jambudvīpa, it would take him twelve years to do so, but at present the Tathāgata, through the use of his supernormal power, will make it return in an instant'. Hardly had the Tathāgata uttered those words than the stone reappeared in space and a shower of divine flowers of several hundred kinds fell. Then the young people, more than five hundred in number, seeing from afar that stone coming, all fled and dispersed without any of them remaining on the spot where they were before. The Buddha said to the young people: 'Fear nothing! The Tathāgata himself knows the moment'. At that moment, the Blessed Lord held out his left hand, took the stone and, placing it in his right hand, stood it upright. Then the three thousand great thousands of worlds trembled six times and, in space, the hidden gods scattered all kinds of *utpala* flowers. Thereupon, the five hundred young

people marvelled (saying): 'That never existed before! It is utterly extraordinary, utterly unique! The supernormal power of the Tathāgata is truly unequalled! That stone is one hundred and twenty paces long and sixty paces wide, but with one hand he placed it on that spot.'

The five hundred young people said to the Buddha: 'Due to what might did the Tathāgata move that stone? Was it through the bases of supernormal power (*rddhi:pāda*)? Was it by using the power of his knowledge and wisdom that he placed that stone on that spot?' The Buddha said to the young people: 'I did not use the might of the bases of supernormal power, and neither did I use the power of knowledge and wisdom. Now, I used the might of my father and mother to place that stone on that spot'. The young people said to the Buddha: 'We did not know that the Tathāgata uses the might of his father and mother. What is this thing?'

The Blessed Lord said to them: 'I will now tell you a simile, for the wise explain by means of similes. O young people, know this, the might of ten camels is not like (749c) the might of a single ordinary elephant. Furthermore, the might of ten camels and an ordinary elephant is not like the might of a *karada* (?) elephant. Furthermore, the might of ten camels and an ordinary elephant with that of a *karada* (?) elephant is not like the might of a *kudhayana* (?) elephant. Let us imagine the might of ten camels, an ordinary elephant . . . and a *kudhayana* (?) elephant, it is not like the might of a *vāmana* (?) elephant. Let us calculate again: the might of that elephant is not like the might of a *kaneru* elephant. Let us calculate again the might of those elephants: it is not like the might of an *utpala* elephant. Let us calculate again: the might of many of those elephants is not like the might of a *padma* elephant. Let us calculate again: the might of many of those elephants is not like the might of a *kaumuda* elephant. Let us again calculate and compare: it is not like the might of a *pūndarīka* elephant. Again let us calculate and compare: it is not like the might of a perfumed (*gandhin*) elephant. Let us again calculate and compare: it is not like the might of a *mahānāga*. Let us again calculate and compare: it is not like the might of a *nārāyana*. Again let us calculate and compare: it is not

like the might of a universal monarch (*cakravartin*). Let us again calculate: it is not like the might of an *abhiyukta* (?). Let us again calculate and compare: it is not like that of a bodhisattva occupying an empty place. Let us again calculate and compare: it is not like the might of a bodhisattva seated under the Tree of Enlightenment (*bodhivrksa*). Again let us calculate and compare: it is not like the might of the body left by the father and mother of a Tathāgata. At present, it is by means of the might of my father and mother that I placed that stone in that spot'.

At that moment, the five hundred young people said further to the Blessed Lord: 'What, then, is the might of the bases of supernormal power (*rddhipāda*) of a Tathāgata?' The Blessed Lord said to them: 'Formerly I had a disciple named Maudgalyāyana. At that time, we stayed together in the village of the Bamboo Grove (*venuvana*) in Verañjā. There was then, over the whole territory of the land, an extreme famine, people ate each other and their whitened bones filled the roadways. Those who had left home to follow the Path obtained with difficulty food that they begged for. The company of holy ones was thin and its life forces were exhausted. Moreover, all the inhabitants of the village were starving and they had no further resources. Then Mahāmaudgalyāyana came to me and said to me: 'Now, in Verañjā, the famine is extreme and alms-seeking is impossible. The inhabitants are overwhelmed with misery and they have no further livelihood. Now, I have personally received from the Tathāgata this teaching: at present, under this ground, there is a spontaneous (*svayambhu*) earth-fat which is extremely perfumed and tasty. I merely wish that the Blessed Lord would allow his disciples to turn that earth-fat over so that it is above (ground) and people can eat it. Then the company of holy ones could (750a) fully regain their life-forces'. I then said to Maudgalyāyana: 'The worms that move in the earth, where do you wish to put them?' Maudgalyāyana said: 'A hand having the same aspect as that earth needs to be supernormally created, then used to turn that earth-fat, so that each of the worms which move there (could) be put on it'. Then I again said to Maudgalyāyana: 'According to which idea do you wish to turn that earth?' Maudgalyāyana said: 'At present, I shall turn that aspect of earth

just as a man turns the leaf of a tree, there is no doubt or difficulty.' I further said to Maudgalyāyana: 'Stop (*alam!*) Stop! O Maudgalyāyana! There is absolutely no need to turn that earth-fat. Why? If beings (*sattva*) see that, they will be so afraid that the hair that covers them will stand up and the temples of the Buddhas and deities will be demolished'. Then Maudgalyāyana addressed the Buddha, saying: 'I merely wish that the Blessed Lord would permit the company of holy ones to go to Uttaraku to beg for their food.' The Buddha said to Maudgalyāyana: 'In that great community, there is no-one who possesses the bases of supernormal power. How could it go to beg for its food?' Maudgalyāyana said to the Buddha: 'Those who do not have the bases of supernormal power I will take and transport to that land!' The Buddha said to Maudgalyāyana: 'Stop! Stop! O Maudgalyāyana! What need is there for the company of holy ones to go there and seek alms-food? Why? In times to come too, there will be drought and famine, it will be difficult to obtain (food) by begging and men will no longer have colour. Then the notables (*śreshthin*) and brahmins will say to the monks: "Why don't you go to Uttaraku to beg for your food? Formerly, the disciples of the Śākyas race possessed great bases of supernormal power. When, by chance, there was drought and famine, they all went together to Uttaraku to seek alms, and they saved their lives themselves. Now, the disciples of the Śākyas no longer have the bases of supernormal power, or even the supernormal power used by ascetics (*śramana*)". Then they will scorn the monks, and that will cause the notables and householders (*grhapati*) to have thoughts of pride in their hearts and (in consequence) they will undergo an infinity of punishments. O Maudgalyāyana, know this, for these reasons, it is not appropriate for the whole company of monks to go alms-seeking there'. O young people, know this, Maudgalyāyana's bases of supernormal power had such virtue that, in order to calculate the might of Maudgalyāyana's bases of supernormal power, it is everywhere in the three thousand great thousands of worlds, without there being a gap or fissure (where it lacks). Nonetheless, it is not like the might of the bases of supernormal power of the Blessed Lord, who is an hundred times, a thousand times, millions of times and milliards of times greater,

so much so that it cannot be compared by means of a simile. The virtue of the bases of supernormal power of the Tathāgata cannot be measured'.

The young people said to the Buddha: What is the power of the wisdom of the Tathāgata?" The Blessed One said to them: 'Formerly I also had a disciple named Śāriputra, who was the foremost with regard to wisdom (*prajñā*). The ocean (*mahā-samudra*) is eighty-four thousand leagues (*yojana*) long and wide, and full of water. Moreover (750b) Mount Sumeru is eighty-four thousand leagues high and it enters the water by the same amount. Jambudvīpa is twenty-one thousand leagues from north to south and seven thousand leagues from east to west. To make a comparison now, by using the water of the four oceans as ink, Mount Sumeru as tree bark, the grasses and trees of Jambudvīpa as brushes, to act so that all the inhabitants of three thousand great thousands of worlds can write, in wishing to write a book on the actions of wisdom of the monk Śāriputra, O young people, know this, the waters of the four oceans (used as) ink, those brushes and people would gradually complete their existence without being able to act so that (that book on) the wisdom of the monk Śāriputra is completed. Therefore, O young people, he is the foremost in wisdom among my disciples. No-one is superior to Śāriputra in wisdom. By calculating that of the monk Śāriputra, the three thousand great thousands of worlds would be filled without leaving any gap or fissure. If one wished to compare the wisdom of the Tathāgata, it is an hundred, a thousand, millions and milliards of times greater, so much so that it cannot be compared by means of a simile. The power of wisdom of the Tathāgata is like that'.

5) Thereupon, the young people said further to the Buddha: 'Does there exist a power that surpasses that power?' The Blessed One said to them: 'There does indeed exist a power that surpasses that power. — What is it? — It is the power of impermanence (*anityatā*). Today, in the middle of the night, between two twin trees, the Tathāgata will pass away completely, drawn by the power of impermanence'. Then the young people, all together, shed tears (saying): 'The Tathāgata is going to pass away com-

pietely. Why so quickly? The world will lose its eye!"

6) At that moment, the nun Kundalaketu, who was the daughter of the notable (*śresthin*) Varada, had this thought: 'I have learned that the Blessed One is going to pass away completely in a short time, the number of his days being exhausted. It is appropriate for me to go now to the Blessed One to pay him a visit and question him'. That nun then left the town of Vaiśālī and went to the Blessed One. From afar she saw the Tathāgata who, at the head of his company of monks and the five hundred young people, wished to go between the twin trees. Then the nun approached the Blessed One, bowed down at his feet and said to him: 'I have learned that the Blessed One is going to pass away completely in a short time'. The Blessed One said to her: 'The Blessed One is going to pass away completely today, in the middle of the night'. At that moment, the nun said to the Buddha: 'At present, I have left home to study the Path and I have not obtained the fruits (*phala*) which I desire, but the Blessed One is abandoning me and is going to pass away completely. I only wish that he would expound the Good Dharma (*saddharma*) to me, so that I may obtain the fruits which I desire'. The Blessed One said to her: 'Reflect now on the origin of suffering'. The nun further said to the Buddha: 'Real (is) suffering, O Blessed One! Real (is) suffering, O Tathāgata!' (750c) The Blessed One said to her: 'What meaning (*artha*) do you examine when you say "suffering"? The nun said to the Buddha: 'Birth is suffering, old-age is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, sorrows, lamentations and torments are suffering, union with what one dislikes is suffering, separation from what one likes is suffering, in short the five aggregates of grasping (*upādānakandha*) are suffering. It is because I examined that meaning that I said "suffering".'

7) Then the nun, having reflected on the meaning, obtained three superknowledges (*abhijñā*) while she was sitting on her seat. She then said to the Buddha: 'I am not capable of seeing the Blessed One pass away completely. I only wish that he would permit me to pass away completely with him'. The Blessed One then gave his approval by remaining silent. Immediately, the nun rose from her seat, bowed down at the feet of the Blessed One and, in front

of the Buddha, flew off into space, where she performed eighteen transformations: she moved about, or sat down, or moved about again, her body emitted smoke and fire, it jumped and disappeared at her will without encountering any obstacles, or else it poured forth water or flames, filling all space. When the nun had accomplished innumerable transformations, she passed away completely in the sphere of Nirvāṇa without a remainder (*anavaśeṣanirvāṇadhātu*). Then, the Blessed One said to the monks: 'Among my listeners (*śrāvakas*), the foremost nun with regard to promptness of wisdom is the nun Kundala'.

8) The Blessed One then said to Ānanda: 'Go between those two twin trees and lay out a couch for the Tathāgata in such a way that his head would be at the north'. The other replied: 'Yes, O Blessed One'. Immediately, having received that order from the Buddha, he went between the two twin trees and laid out a couch for the Tathāgata, then he returned to the Blessed One, bowed down at his feet and said to him: 'The couch is laid out so that the head is at the north. It is suitable for you to know the (appropriate) moment'. Thereupon, the Blessed One went between those trees where the couch was laid out. At that moment, Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One: 'For what reasons did the Blessed One say that his couch should be laid out, with its head pointing to the north?' The Buddha said to Ānanda: 'After my complete passing away (*parinirvāṇa*), the Buddhadharma will remain in North India. It is for that reason that I had my couch laid out pointing towards the north'.

9) At that moment, the Blessed One divided up his three robes (*tricīvara*). Ānanda then said to the Buddha: 'Why does the Tathāgata divide up his three robes today?' The Buddha said to Ānanda: 'It is because of my donors (*dānapati*) in future times that I divided up those robes. It is in wishing to act so that those men may receive merit (*pūrya*) that I have divided up my robes'.

10) At that moment, the Blessed One suddenly caused to issue from his lips a five-coloured light which illuminated the whole town. Ānanda then said to the Buddha: 'For what reason does the Tathāgata cause to issue from his lips (751a) that five-coloured light?' The Blessed One said to him: 'I have reflected in this way:

formerly, when the Enlightenment was not yet accomplished, those who dwelled for a long time in the hells swallowed balls of burning iron, or else they ate grasses and wood to make their four great (elements) (*mahābhūta*) grow, or else they became mules, asses, camels, elephants, horses, pigs or sheep, or else they became hungry ghosts (*preta*) and, to make their four great (elements) grow, their bodies had received a mouth as narrow as that of a foetus, or else they received divine happiness and they fed on spontaneous (*svayambhu*) ambrosia (*amṛta*). Now that I have become a Tathāgata, that I am enlightened regarding the Path through the power of my faculties (*indriya*), that I have received the body of a Tathāgata, for that reason I cause the five-coloured light to issue from my lips'.

At that moment, in a single instant, he caused to issue from his lips a marvellous light, superior to the preceding light. Ānanda then said to the Blessed One: 'For what reason does the Tathāgata again emit a light, superior to the previous one?' The Blessed One said to him: 'I have reflected in this way: when the Blessed Ones, the Buddhas of the past, passed away completely, they left a teaching which did not endure for long in the world. I further reflected: by which means (*upāya*) can I act so that my teaching may remain in the world for a long time? The body of the Tathāgata is to be counted among diamonds (*vajra*); I wish to break that body into pieces (as small as) mustard seeds in order to disperse them in the world so that, in the future, donors (*dānapati*) who delight in faith (*śraddhā*) but no longer see the form of the Tathāgata, will take them and pay homage (*pūjā*) to them and, due to the assistance of that merit, they will be reborn into families of the four castes, into families of the four Divine Kings, among the Thirty-Three gods, among the Yāma gods, among the Tuṣita gods, among the Nirmāṇarati gods, among the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods, due to the assistance of that merit they will be reborn in the World of Desire (*kāmadhātu*), the World of Form (*rūpadhātu*) or the Formless World (*ārūpyadhamātu*), or again they will acquire the Srotāpanna Path (*mārga*), the Sakṛdāgāmin Path, the Anāgāmin Path, the Arhat Path, the Pratyekabuddha Path or the Path of the Samyaksambuddhas. It is for that reason that I caused the brilliant light to issue forth.'

11) Then, the Blessed One himself folded his *saṅghāti* into four thicknesses, placed it on the ground and (lay down) on his right side, his feet together, one on top of the other. Then Venerable Ānanda, much afflicted, could not help weeping and shedding a flood of tears. Furthermore, he questioned himself and reproached himself for not having yet achieved the Path and for still being attached by the fetters (*samyojana*) and (he said): Now, the Blessed One is going to abandon me and pass away completely. Who will be my support and my help?

12) At that moment, the Blessed One, knowing (that), said to the monks: 'Where is the monk Ānanda at present?' The monks answered him: 'The monk Ānanda is at present behind the bed of the Tathāgata, he cannot help lamenting and shedding tears. Furthermore, he is questioning himself and reproaching himself for not having achieved the Path and for not having severed his fetters (saying): 'Now, the Blessed One is going to abandon me and pass away completely'. Then, the Blessed One said to Ānanda: 'Stop, stop, O Ānanda! There is no need to sorrow, since mankind, animals and the world which they inhabit are all destined to destruction. You wish them to change, but that is impossible. With vigour (*vīrya*) accrued through zeal, think of the Good Dharma (*saddharma*) and cultivate it. Thus, (751b) in a short time you will come to the end of suffering and you will perform activities (*samskāra* ?) free of defilements (*anāśrava*). In the past, the Tathāgata Arhat Samyamsambuddhas also had assistants (*upasthāka*) like this one, and assuredly the Buddhas of the future, (as numerous as) the sand-grains of the Ganges, will also have assistants comparable to Ānanda. The noble (*ārya*) universal monarchs (*cakravartin rājan*) have four qualities (*dharma*) which did not exist previously. What are those four? When a noble universal monarch wishes to leave his realm, of people who see him there is none who is not joyful. When a noble universal monarch gives orders, of those who hear him there is none who is not joyful, they are in no way tired of hearing his orders. When a noble universal monarch remains silent, people who see him remaining silent are all joyful. Such are the four qualities possessed by noble universal monarchs and which did not exist previously. O monks, know this, Ānanda now also has four

qualities which did not exist previously. What are those four? If the monk Ānanda arrives in a large community while remaining silent, of those who see him there is none who is not joyful. If the monk Ānanda utters words, those who hear him are all joyful. If the monk Ānanda arrives in a group of the four classes, in a group of *kṣatriyas* or brahmins, if he enters a group of ruling kings or householders (*grhapati*) all are joyful, they arouse thoughts of respect and they look at him without tiring. If the monk Ānanda utters words, they listen to his teaching of the Dharma without tiring. Such are the four qualities of that monk which did not exist previously'.

13) At that moment, Ānanda said to the Blessed One: 'What conduct should we follow with women? At present, when the time has come, the monks don their robes, take their bowl and beg for their food from one house to another, for the happiness and benefit of beings (*sattva*)'. The Buddha said to Ānanda: 'Do not look at each other (with them). If you look at each other, do not speak to them. If you speak to them, concentrate your mind'. Then the Blessed One uttered this stanza:

'Do not have relations with women, do not speak to them.
Those who can keep themselves apart and distant then avoid
eight difficulties'.

14) (751c) 'What conduct should we follow with the monk Channa?' The Blessed One said: 'Punish him by means of the law of Brahma (*brahmadharma*)'. Ānanda said to the Buddha: 'How do we punish him by means of the law of Brahma?' The Blessed One said: 'You should not speak to the monk Channa. You should not even say to him "That is good" or "That is bad", and that monk should not address you'. Ananda said to the Buddha: 'But if he does not examine that matter correctly, will not the punishment for his faults be aggravated?' The Blessed One said: 'Simply do not speak to him, that is the punishment of the law of Brahma. If he does not redeem himself because of that, he should be led into the assembly, where people will judge him and have him expelled, but do not expose him to the (disciplinary) precepts and do not (participate) with him in a gathering of Dharma (teaching)'. Then, the Blessed One uttered this stanza:

'Those who wish to conduct themselves as foes with others, who do not return their enmity, think constantly of that, but do not speak to them, for those are (men) who corrupt those who are innocent'.

15) At that moment, the inhabitants of Kuśinagara learned that the Tathāgata was going to pass away completely in the middle of the night. Then, the inhabitants of the land went to the two twin trees, and having arrived, bowed down at the feet (of the Buddha) and sat to one side. Those people said to the Blessed One: 'We have just learned that the Tathāgata is going to pass away completely. How may we show him our respect?' Then the Blessed One turned to look at Ānanda. Immediately, the latter had this thought: 'At present, the body of the Tathāgata is exhausted by fatigue. He wishes to act so that I may transmit the homages of these (people) to him.' Immediately, Ānanda placed his knee on the ground, joined his hands and said to the Blessed One: 'Here are are two families of this clan, one named Varada (?), the second named Subhadra, who now come to take refuge in the Tathāgata and the Community of holy ones. They only wish that the Blessed One will accept them as *upāsakas*. Henceforth, they will no longer kill living beings. Here again is the one named Tiṣya and the second, named Upatiṣya. Here also is the one named Puṣya and the second, named Kṛttika. Thus, they have all come to take refuge in the Tathāgata and only wish that the Blessed One will accept them as *upāsakas*. (752a) Henceforth, they will no longer kill living beings, but they will observe the five precepts'. Then the Blessed One expounded the Dharma to them in detail, after which he dismissed them to return home. Immediately, the five hundred Mallas rose from their seats, made the threefold circumambulation of the Buddha and departed backwards.

16) At that moment, the Blessed One said to Ānanda: 'I have received my very last disciples, namely, the five hundred Mallas of Kuśinagara'. Then the brahmin ascetic (*brahmacārin*) Subhadra arrived in Kuśinagara from another land. From afar he saw the five hundred men approaching and asked them: 'Where have you come from?'. The five hundred men answered: 'O Subhadra, know

this, the Tathāgata is going to pass away completely today, between two twin trees'. Subhadra then reflected thus: 'When a Tathāgata appears in the world, it is extremely difficult to meet him, since a Tathāgata appears in the world from time to time (as rarely) as *udumbara* flowers, which appear (once) in an hundred thousand cosmic periods (*kalpa*). At present, I still have some doubts (due to which) I do not understand all the articles of the Dharma. Only this ascetic (*śramaṇa*) Gautama can dispel my doubts. I can now go to this Gautama and question him on those meanings (*artha*)'.

Then the brahmin ascetic Subhadra went between the two twin trees, and having reached Ānanda, said to the latter: 'I have learned that the Blessed One is going to pass away completely today. Is that true?' Ānanda replied: 'It is an avowed truth'. Subhadra said to him: 'At present, I have doubts and I only wish that I be permitted to tell this to the Blessed One: "Other men cannot understand what is taught by the six masters. May I see the ascetic Gautama (in order to know) what he says?"' Ananda said to him: 'Stop, stop, O Subhadra! Do not importune the Tathāgata!' Thus, three times (Subhadra) again said to Ānanda: 'When the Tathāgatas appear in the world, it is extremely difficult to meet them. Just like *udumbara* flowers which appear from time to time, the Tathāgatas appear only from time to time. If I can now see the Tathāgata, it is enough if he can dispel my doubts. Why should I not be contented with what he will tell me concerning the meanings (*artha*) on which I would question him now? Moreover, O Ānanda, do not come with me to speak to the Blessed One. Once I have heard the Tathāgata, I will contemplate him unrestrictedly from one side, I will face and look at him endlessly, but today, even if I do not see him, present me (to him)'.

At that moment, the Blessed One, owing to his divine eye, from afar saw Subhadra who, turned towards Ānanda, was holding that conversation with him. The Blessed One then said to Ānanda: 'Stop, stop, O Ānanda! Do not prevent the brahmin ascetic Subhadra (from speaking to me)! Why? He has come to question me on the meaning, which is of great profit. If I expound the Dharma to him, he will win Deliverance'. Thereupon, Ānanda said to Subhadra: 'It is well (*sādhu*)! It is well! The

Tathāgata permits you to enter now and hear his Dharma'. As soon as Subhadra heard those words, he could not help jumping for joy (752b) and, having approached the Blessed One, bowed down at his feet and sat to one side. Then, Subhadra said to the Blessed One: 'At present, I would like to question you and I wish only that you permit me to'. The Blessed One then said to Subhadra: 'It is just the appropriate moment for you to question me'. Subhadra then said to the Buddha: 'Different ascetics (*śramaṇa*), O Gautama, know the means and procedures to win over many (people). They are Pūrana Kāśyapa, Ajita (Keśakambalin), (Maskarin) Gośalu, Pakudha Kātyāyana, Samjayin Vairuṭiputra, Nirgranthaputra. Do such men know the matters of the three worlds? Why do they not explain them? Among those six masters, is there a Conqueror (*jina*)? A Tathāgata?' The Blessed One then said: 'Stop, stop, O Subhadra! Do not question me on that meaning! Why do you importune me by asking if those men are Conquerors, Tathāgatas? Henceforth, while I am on this couch, I am going to teach you my Dharma. Pay great attention!' Subhadra said to the Buddha: 'At present, I will question you on the profound (*gambhīra*) meaning. I wish only that the Blessed One may speak of this to me at the appropriate moment'.

Thereupon, the Buddha said to him: 'I was twenty-nine years old when I began to study the Path, because I wished to win over beings. At the age of thirty-five, I studied among the heterodox (*tīrthika*) but, from then on, I saw no more ascetics (*śramaṇa*) or brahmins since, in their large company, there were none of the four fruits (*phala*) of the religious life (*śrāmanya*). O Subhadra, the world was entirely empty, there were no holy men (*arhat*) who had acquired the Path. It is in the holy Dharma and because of it that there are men who possess the holy Dharma, that there are those whose fruits of the religious life constitute fruition (*vipāka*). Why? Because all those who have the four fruits of the religious life as fruition owe that to the Noble Eightfold Path. O Subhadra, if I had not attained that supreme (*anuttara*) Noble Path, none of them would have attained the Noble Eightfold Path, and it is because I attained the Noble Eightfold Path that I accomplished the Path of the Buddhas. That is why, O Subhadra, you should seek the means (*upāya*) to attain the Noble Path'.

Subhadra again said to the Buddha: 'I also delight in hearing (talk) of the Noble Eightfold Path, and I wish only that you may disseminate it by expounding it'. The Blessed One said to him: 'What is called the Eightfold Path is right thought, right intention, right speech, right livelihood, right action, right vigour, right attention and right mental concentration. Such is, O Subhadra, what is called the Noble Eightfold Path.' At that moment Subhadra, while he was on his seat, obtained the perfectly pure Dharma eye (*dharmaçaksus*).

Thereupon, Subhadra said to Ānanda: 'At present, I have just, with much joy, obtained a great profit (*sulābha*) and I wish only that the Blessed One may accept that I become an ascetic (*śramaṇa*)'. Ānanda answered him: 'Now go yourself to the Blessed One and ask him to make you an ascetic'. Then, Subhadra approached the Blessed One, bowed down at his feet and said to him: 'I wish only (752c) that the Blessed One may agree to make me an ascetic'. Immediately, Subhadra's body became like that of an ascetic (*śramaṇa*), girded in the three robes (*tricivāra*) of the Dharma. At that moment, Subhadra contemplated the sight of the Blessed One and, while he was on his seat, his mind blemished by defilements (*sāsrava*) obtained Deliverance (*vimukti*). The Blessed One then said to Ānanda: 'Among my disciples, the very last is Subhadra'.

17) Then, Subhadra said to the Buddha: 'I have just learned that the Blessed One was going to pass away completely in the middle of the night. I wish only that the Blessed One may allow me to pass away completely before then, since I could not bear to see the Tathāgata pass away completely before (me)'. The Blessed One then acquiesced by remaining silent. Why? In the past, the Blessed Ones, the Buddhas (as numerous as) the sand-grains of the Ganges, (agreed that) the very last of their disciples could pass away completely before (them), after which those Tathāgatas passed away completely. This is the constant rule (*dharma*) of the Buddhas, the Blessed Ones, it is not by pure chance just now. Once Subhadra had seen that the Blessed One acquiesced, in front of the Buddha, his body straight, his mind correct, his attention fixed on what was in front of it, Subhadra passed away com-

pletely in the sphere of Nirvāṇa without a remainder (*anavaśesa-nirvāṇadhatu*). At that moment, the earth was shaken by six tremors. Then, the Blessed One uttered this stanza:

'All formations (*samskāra*) are impermanent (*anitya*), what is born will certainly die, but what is not born will not die. This cessation (*nirodha*) is supreme happiness (*sukha*)'.

18) The Blessed One then said to Ānanda: 'I order the monks that, henceforth, they no longer address each other (in terms) of Lord or Servant, superiors being called Honourable (*arya*) and inferiors called Wise (*bhadra*). They should consider each other as older and younger brothers. Henceforth, they should not be called by the name given to them by their father and mother'. Ānanda said to the Blessed One: 'By what names should the monks now call each other?' The Blessed One said to him: 'If an inferior monk addresses a superior monk, he should call him Venerable Senior (*āyusmani*), and a superior monk who addresses an inferior should call him by his clan (*gotra*) name. Moreover, monks who wish to choose a name for themselves should base it on the three Honourables. Such are my orders and my prohibitions'. Then, having heard the Blessed One's words, Ānanda was well pleased and applied himself to their practice.

* * *

The study of this text is based in the main on a comparison which should be made with parallel texts, particularly the six versions of the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra. We would like to do so by referring to the fine work by Prof. Ernst Waldschmidt, *Die Überlieferung vom Lebensende des Buddha* (Göttingen 1944-8) and *Das Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (Abhandlungen der deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Berlin 1950 and 1951), as well as our own *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans les Sūtrapitaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens II. Les derniers mois, le Parinirvāṇa et les funérailles* (Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris 1970 and 1971), and to our article on 'La

composition et les étapes de la formation progressive du Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra ancien' (*Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* LXVI, Paris 1979, pp.45-103).

The sūtra in the Ekottarāgama consists of eighteen episodes which can be enumerated as follows:

- 1) The Buddha's last look at Vaiśālī.
- 2) The affliction of the people of Vaiśālī.
- 3) The marvel of the river near Vaiśālī.
- 4) The marvel of the stone at Kuśinagara,
- 5) The affliction of the people of Kuśinagara.
- 6) The visit of the nun Kundalaketu.
- 7) The complete passing away of the nun Kundalaketu.
- 8) The Buddha's installation under the twin trees.
- 9) The dividing of the Buddha's robes.
- 10) Various marvels performed by the Buddha.
- 11) Ānanda's affliction.
- 12) The Buddha consoles Ānanda and praises his wonderful qualities.
- 13) The rules of conduct for monks concerning women.
- 14) Conduct to be used towards the monk Channa.
- 15) The visit of the Mallas from Kuśinagara.
- 16) The visit of Subhadra the brahmin ascetic.
- 17) The complete passing away of Subhadra.
- 18) The Buddha's final admonitions to his disciples.

Structurally, this sūtra is greatly differentiated from the six versions of the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra (= MPNS) which, despite numerous and at times considerable differences between each other, on the whole present a strong resemblance, which a comparison with our sūtra will bring out.

In the first place, the Ekottarāgama (= EĀ) text contains only three episodes, the first three, located outside Kuśinagara, whereas the six MPNSs open with an account of events located in Rājagrha, then continue with a narration of actions which occurred in Pāṭaligrāma, and which these six MPNS continue with numerous episodes located first in Vaiśālī then in the neighbourhood of that town, followed by several more spaced out along the road from Vaiśālī to Kuśinagara, where the Parinirvāṇa

of the Buddha and his funeral took place. Thus, our EĀ sūtra appears to have preserved a very archaic structure, concentrating on events located in Kuśinagara in the hours which preceded the supreme Passing Away of the Blessed One. We find confirmation of this in that only the three episodes which it locates in Vaiśālī concern the extreme end of the Buddha's last stay in that town and that one of the three, the last look at Vaiśālī, is also recounted by five of the six MPNSs. The other two, which follow on from this first episode, are found elsewhere in only one of these MPNSs, that which, moreover, differs from the others in its structure and through various characters, but the origin of which remains unknown. These three initial episodes located in Vaiśālī which, furthermore, are somewhat brief, were probably added quite late to the early version of the EĀ sūtra, which must have been reduced to a series of scenes with Kuśinagara as its setting.

However, this series itself was obviously established gradually, since it contains elements from very diverse periods. In fact, several of the episodes which it contains, not least by their length, are unknown elsewhere, in particular in the six MPNSs. These are, basically, the marvel of the stone thrown by the Buddha in Kuśinagara, including the long discourse praising the Blessed One's might, then the visit of the nun Kundalaketu and her complete passing away. The Pāli Canon is fully cognisant of a nun named Kundalakesī who was regarded by the Buddha as also being the foremost in promptness of intelligence, but it says nothing of her presence with the Blessed One in Kuśinagara at the moment of the Parinirvāṇa and it is also silent over her passing away. These three episodes, therefore, were thought up very late and so inserted in our sūtra. We should note, furthermore, that all three of them are placed at the beginning of the series of episodes set in Kuśinagara, which is very clear proof of their addition to an earlier version of the sūtra, which consisted of the following eleven episodes, which we will examine further on. It can even be supposed that this addition preceded that of the three scenes located in Vaiśālī and which must have been borrowed later from a text close to the only MPNS that recounts all three. Nonetheless, the three later episodes set in Kuśinagara may well have been inserted after those of Vaiśālī, since they are

precisely linked to the town of the Mallas. In fact, the first concerns an exploit, the intention of which is ascribed to the men of Kuśinagara, which requires the presence of the Buddha in that town, and the other two are based on the desire of the nun Kundalaketu to see the Buddha before his Parinirvāna, which leads her to hasten to the spot where it will take place. It is also understandable that the addition of these three episodes could well have been an insertion into an early version, between the three scenes located in Vaiśālī and the long series of those which already had the town of the Mallas as their setting.

It is also highly possible that the insertion of the two episodes introducing the nun Kundalaketu preceded by some greater or lesser length of time that of the account of the marvel of the stone and the discourse which follows. On the one hand, the tone is very different, much more faithful to the normal spirit of sūtras and lacking the supernatural elements of that account and discourse, the exaggerations of which seem truly ridiculous to us. Moreover, their inspiration is very different: the nun Kundalaketu conducts herself on the whole very much as will, a little later, the ascetic Subhadra, of whom she is in some way the feminine double. Since the episode of Subhadra's visit is well-known elsewhere, not only in the six MPNSs, but also in the two Samyuktāgamas, it is clear that it is at the origin of the invention of the two scenes in which the nun plays the main part. We are therefore probably right in supposing that these two scenes were added to our sūtra before the episode of the marvel of the stone and the discourse which followed it. This addition was nonetheless quite late, since these two scenes are unknown to other canonical texts that have come down to us.

Nearly all the other episodes, which are set in Kuśinagara, are found in the MPNSs and therefore belong to early versions of the EA sūtra. If it is compared to other canonical texts containing parallel scenes, we can apparently recognise various stages in the establishment of the series. The earliest episodes would be the following:

- 1) The installation of the Buddha under the twin trees (= 8).
- 2) The visit of Subhadra the ascetic (= 16).

- 3) The complete passing away of Subhadra (= 17).
- 4) The affliction of the inhabitants of Kuśinagara (= 5).

We should note, nevertheless, that this last episode has been displaced in our sūtra: instead of following immediately after the account, whether brief or detailed, of the Parinirvāna, it precedes it by far, since it is placed between the account of the marvel of the stone, accompanied by the discourse which this incurs, and that of the visit of the nun. In fact, it is presented as a kind of brief appendix to the Buddha's discourse after the marvel and is lead quite skilfully by the transition of the extraordinary power of the Tathāgata to that, even greater, of the impermanence which will cause the Parinirvāna. This displacement is linked, in all appearances, to the fact that our sūtra does not narrate, let alone mention in its place the supreme Passing Away of the Blessed One but concludes just before for reasons unknown to us.

A little later these early kernels were expanded by the following episodes, also narrated by the six MPNSs but absent from other canonical sources:

- 5) Ānanda's affliction (= 11).
- 6) The Buddha consoles Ānanda and praises his qualities (= 12).
- 7) The conduct to be used towards the monk Channa (= 14).
- 8) The Buddha's final admonitions to his disciples (= 18).
- 9) The visit of the Mallas from Kuśinagara (= 15).

Even later, two episodes were added and which appear only in three of the six MPNSs:

- 10) Various marvels performed by the Buddha (= 10).
- 11) The rules of conduct for monks concerning women (= 13).

Very much later, a brief scene unknown elsewhere, at least by the early canonical texts, was inserted: the dividing up of the Buddha's three robes, which immediately follows the installation of the Buddha under the twin trees and precedes the account of the marvels. This scene was clearly inspired by the homage rendered to three monastic robes presented to devotees as having belonged to the Buddha. Was one of those three robes the Blessed One's *sanghāti*, the presence of which Fa-hsien, Sung-yun and Hsüan-tsang noted in the neighbourhood of the town of Hidda,

120 km east of modern Kabul? It is possible since, in order to explain the position of the dying Buddha with his head towards the north, in episode No.8 our sūtra attributes to him these significant words: 'After my Parinirvāna, the Buddhadharma will remain in northern India'. Nonetheless, the Blessed One having certainly used a successive quantity of robes in the course of his long life and the veneration of relics having a greater propensity to increase the former for the satisfaction of an ever larger number of devotees, such pieces of material must have been offered for the veneration of the Buddhist faithful in many other places in India, and more particularly in northern India, from the first centuries of the Common Era.

The episode of the marvel of the river (No.3) clearly alludes to another relic of the Buddha, namely, the alms-bowl (*pātra*) which the former cast to the faithful of Vaiśālī as he left them, after having created an uncrossable trench in order to disengage from those importuners. Fa-hsien and Hsüan-tsang recount this legend in connection with their passage through that place, but neither of them note the presence of that relic or of a stūpa which might have contained it. Doubtless that object must have long since disappeared by their time and no material trace of it had been preserved thereabouts.

It is the same for the heavy stone raised upright by the Blessed One in order to demonstrate his superhuman might to the young Mallas of Kuśinagara. Neither Fa-hsien nor Hsüan-tsang saw that immense rock, an hundred paces long and sixty wide, and they make no allusion whatever to that object or its legend. Since it is difficult to believe that such a rock, which must have been clearly visible on the immense plain where Kuśinagara was to be found, could have disappeared in a few centuries without leaving the least trace, we can but think that this story of a marvel is purely imaginary and was not invented to provide a Buddhist explanation for some accident of terrain.

Relics of quite another kind are mentioned in the narration of the marvels performed by the Buddha in Kuśinagara (No.10), namely, the dividing up of the Blessed One's body into a multitude of particles intended for the veneration of the faithful, a

veneration due to which these last acquired immense merit in the form of rebirth among fortunate men or the gods, and finally as the fruits of holiness. This passage, absent in the parallel canonical texts, has the obvious aim of justifying the veneration paid to the bodily relics (*sarira*) of the Buddha, that is, to the minuscule fragments of calcinated bones collected after the cremation of his body. This, it seems, is an allusion, not only to the sharing out of these relics into eight portions, as is recounted in the last chapters of the six MPNSs, but also doubtless to their distribution among several myriads of stūpas scattered by Aśoka over all his vast empire.

At the end of the same passage, it should be noted that the career of the Sāmyaksambuddhas is promised, alongside those of Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas, to the faithful who pay homage to those bodily relics. This is an idea which, if it is not frankly Mahāyānist, is at least close to concepts of the Great Vehicle, but it is true that the EA, here and there, contains clearly Mahāyānist elements which were inserted quite late in the text of that collection. However, we should remark that, in the present passage, it is a question of a goal to be attained, that is, the Great Enlightenment which transforms the holy one into a perfect Buddha, and not of the long series of existences which precedes that event and prepares him, that Bodhisattva career which is in itself proposed as the ideal for adherents of the Mahāyāna. This means perhaps that this paragraph does not yet pertain to the Mahāyāna, but only to an intermediate stage between early Buddhism, what was to be called Hinayāna, and Mahāyāna proper, a stage of which other early canonical texts, particularly those of the Theravādins, which remained resolutely refractory to Mahāyānist tendencies, have retained scarcely any trace. Doubtless we can see here an indication that the EA belonged to one of the sub-schools of the Mahāsāṃghika group, a group which was very important but which, alas, remains mostly unknown to us through a lack of documentation.

If several parts of our sūtra were conceived quite late or contain very late additions, others remained very faithful to early versions of the episodes which they narrate. Certain of them have even preserved for us the most archaic version of this or that

scene, as is clearly shown by a comparison with the parallel texts, in particular with the six MPNSs. This is so with the account of the Buddha's last look at Vaiśālī (No.1), taken without any modification from a version which has remained set in its most ancient form. It is the same for several scenes or groups of phrases pertaining to the following episodes: the installation of the Buddha under the twin trees (No.8), Ānanda's affliction (No.11), the Buddha's consolation of Ānanda (No.12), the rules of conduct for monks concerning women (No.13), the visit of the Mallas from Kuśinagara (No.15). The last four accounts, moreover, have only undergone modifications of little importance and have remained faithful to the oldest version in their essentials. This same fidelity is noticeable in respect of the other four episodes, despite more numerous alterations of details, behind which it is less easy to find the early text: the conduct to be used towards the monk Channa (No.14), the visit of Subhadra the ascetic (No.16), Subhadra's complete passing away (No.17) and the Buddha's final admonitions to his disciples (No.18). In contrast, the accounts of the affliction of the people from Kuśinagara (No.5) and of the marvels performed by the Buddha in Kuśinagara (No.10) have been considerably altered and belong to a more recent stage than the parallel texts in the evolution of the legend.

Despite these later, even much later and of considerable importance, additions and alterations, the EĀ sūtra has on the whole remained faithful to a very early version of the MPNS, even more faithful than the six MPNSs we have to hand. Not only has it preserved passages and even episodes from a version more archaic than those of these six texts, but its structure shows it to be from a stage clearly older than theirs in the formation of the MPNS. As we saw earlier, all the episodes it contains are set in Kuśinagara, apart from the first three, taken from an account of the Buddha's last stay in Vaiśālī, of which they constitute the extreme end. Hence, there lack all the preceding parts of the six MPNSs, which contain in full some fifty episodes, at times of great importance, spaced all along the road leading from Rājagrha to Kuśinagara, via Pāṭaligrāma and Vaiśālī. Moreover, if it contains episodes absent in the six MPNSs, in contrast it ignores several which recount these last: the choice of Kuśinagara as the

site of the Parinirvāṇa, the Buddha's last words and, especially, the long series of those which narrate the Parinirvāṇa itself (an episode which is curiously missing in our sūtra), the Buddha's funeral and the argument over the relics, the importance and fame of which are undeniable. It has only seven episodes in common with the six MPNSs: the installation of the Buddha under the twin trees (No.8), Ānanda's affliction (No.11), the Buddha's consolation of Ānanda (No.12), the visit of the Mallas from Kuśinagara (No.15), the visit of Subhadra the ascetic (No.16), Subhadra's complete passing away (No.17), and the Buddha's final admonitions to his disciples (No.18), including the conduct to be used towards the monk Channa (No.14). Our sūtra has two further episodes in common with only three of the six MPNSs, among them the Pāli: the various marvels performed by the Buddha in Kuśinagara (No.10) and the rules of conduct concerning women (No.13), which indicates a common tradition with the Theravādins and Dharmaguptakas, without this proving a relationship between the school to which the EĀ belonged and those two.

If the structure of our sūtra shows that it pertained to a stage clearly prior to that where the six MPNSs were formed, it is in contrast later, according to appearances, than that of short series of certain sūtras in the Pāli Samyutta Nikāya and the Samyuktāgamas of the Sarvāstivādins and Kāśyapiyas, consisting of only three or six episodes. Our text has no episode in common with the Pāli sūtra, but it has three with the others: the installation of the Buddha between the two twin trees (No.8), Subhadra's visit (No.16) and his complete passing away (No.17).

Similar verification can be made by studying two other sūtras in the EĀ (T 125, 593a-b; 619a-624b) narrating a series of episodes from the eve of the Enlightenment to the Buddha's return to Kapilavastu: alongside several episodes manifestly conceived much later, we find in them many others whose text is at least as old, and sometimes older, than those of other parallel canonical accounts, in Pāli or Chinese translation; moreover, a certain number of episodes narrated by these parallel texts, particularly all those which are set in Rājagrha, are totally lacking in our EĀ sūtra, which has thus remained more faithful than the others to a very ancient version of this partial biography of the

Buddha, limited to events which followed the Enlightenment.

This clearly shows that a study of the EA, which is little known, should not be neglected since, besides numerous incontestably very late elements, it also contains many other extremely ancient elements, even more ancient than those of the corresponding Pāli texts. It is therefore of importance to research and examine these data which have remained set in their archaic form if we wish to advance in our knowledge of the oldest stages of Buddhist literature and, in consequence, of the history of Buddhism in general.

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IS THE AṢṭASĀHASRIKĀ PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ SŪTRA REALLY ARGUING AGAINST THE SARVĀSTIVĀDINS?

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INTRODUCTION

It goes without saying that the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras have been of enormous importance to the development of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Yet, it is not well understood under what circumstances, and with what intentions, these texts were actually composed. In fact, assumptions (rather than knowledge substantiated by evidence) often seem to form the basis for literature treating the rise and development of the Mahāyāna, especially with regard to the nature of its relationship with other early schools. The underlying aim of the present paper is to emphasise the importance of examining what the texts themselves have to say about this subject. More specifically, this paper aims at re-evaluating the relationship (if any) between the Mahāyāna and the Sarvāstivāda (which is distinguished by its theory of the substantiality of *dharma*s) on the basis of evidence found in the Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra (henceforth abbreviated as Aṣṭa), which is considered the earliest Prajñāpāramitā sūtra (as well as the earliest of all Mahāyāna sūtras).

When discussing the early development of the Mahāyāna, especially with the Aṣṭa in mind, some scholars talk about 'the Mahāyāna critique of the Sarvāstivāda's notion of own-nature', as Harvey has done (P. Harvey, *An introduction to Buddhism*, Cambridge 1990, p.87). Another author writes:

The Mahāyāna... arose as an attempt to popularize Buddha-word and also as a reaction against the metaphysics of the Sarvāstivāda school which abandoned the anti-substantialist or anti-essentialist position. . . (D.J. Kalupahana in, J. Dhirasekera, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* 4, 3, Colombo 1979, p.450).

This latter statement involves at least two issues: the nature of the origin of the Mahāyāna and the question of whether the target of the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras' criticism really was the

Sarvāstivādins. The present paper will consider the latter issue by examining the *Aṣṭa*, our main concern being with the question of whether there is any evidence in this text to support such statements as have been quoted above.

Part of our argument will be that just because the Sarvāstivādins subscribe to the substantiality of *dharma*s and because the *Aṣṭa* presents a critique of the own-being of *dharma*s, it does not necessarily follow that the *Aṣṭa* is targeted on the Sarvāstivādins. To defend such a statement, one must come up with evidence that the *Aṣṭa* is arguing against the Sarvāstivādins specifically, or that one of its specific targets is definitely the Sarvāstivādins. One needs evidence that the author¹ of the *Aṣṭa* definitely had the Sarvāstivādins in mind when writing the critique of the essentialist view. In other words, one needs to show that the *Aṣṭa* contains criticism that applies only to the Sarvāstivādins.

In what follows we shall begin by placing the Sarvāstivāda and the *Aṣṭa* in historical and geographical contexts to inquire into the extent to which the author of the *Aṣṭa* could have been conscious of the Sarvāstivāda. Then we shall briefly outline some of the important characteristic doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda before discussing what kind of evidence can be found in the *Aṣṭa* concerning our main question.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The *Aṣṭa* was first translated into Chinese by Chih-lu-chia-ch'an (Lokakṣema) in 180 CE and, next, by Chih-ch'ien in 225 CE. Conze suggests that by 150 CE the text 'was constituted roughly as it is today' (E. Conze, 'The Composition of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*', in his *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies*, Oxford 1967, p.169).

The Sarvāstivāda, one of the Eighteen Schools (*nikāya*), appears to have been derived from the main Sthavira trunk, most likely after the great 'schism'. During the second century CE the Sarvāstivāda enjoyed Kaniṣka's royal patronage and, by this time,

this school's scholars seem to have been composing systematic exegetical works. The famous Mahāvibhāṣā — the massive commentary on the Jñānaprasthāna, one of the seven books constituting the Abhidharma Pitaka — contains a great deal of information on the Sarvāstivāda as well as other schools. For our purposes, however, we cannot rely on this text since it does not seem to antedate the *Aṣṭa*. The Mahāvibhāṣā seems to have been composed around 200 CE, or perhaps in the third century CE². In addition, this text introduces much new doctrine as well as new issues.

More useful to us are the seven treatises grouped under the Abhidharma Piṭaka: Saṅgītiparyāya, composed approximately two hundred years after the decease (ca. 370 BCE?) of the Buddha; Dharmaskandha, Vijñānakāya, ca. one hundred years after the decease of the Buddha; Dhātukāya, Prakaraṇapāda, Prajñaptisāstra, and Jñānaprasthāna, all ca. three hundred years after the decease of the Buddha (L.M. Pruden, English trans. of *Abhidharmakośa-abhāṣyam*, from the French of L. de La Vallée Poussin, 4 vols., Berkeley 1988-90, here I, p.xlviii, 17). Some of these works are particularly important since they first introduced some of the purely Sarvāstivādin sectarian doctrines (see below).

Inscriptional evidence tells us that the Sarvāstivāda existed mainly in the North-West, ranging from Mathura to Afghanistan and the Central Asian desert. If we turn to the *Aṣṭa* for evidence concerning where this text was composed, we find a passage that seemingly suggests that the *Aṣṭa* originated 'in the South' (E. Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*, San

¹ We use the singular form for the sake of convenience.

² The Mahāvibhāṣā, Vol.114, contains a short story that begins by saying, 'There was once (hsī 曉) a king named Kaniṣka' (T 1926, p.593). Although Kaniṣka's dates are still uncertain, inscriptional evidence has led some scholars to suggest that he reigned roughly between 140-170 CE, and that the date of the composition of the Mahāvibhāṣā — depending on 'how long ago' is meant by the expression 'once' (hsī 曉) — may even be as late as the third century CE.

Francisco 1973, p.159)³. Yet, the text does not appear to contain any further evidence that points convincingly to a southern origin. Instead, it has some evidence that it may have originated in the North-West. For instance, we find some references (*ibid.*, pp.20, 31, 169, 257, 290) to dry climate — which points to the North, the rest of India being generally wet. The Ratnaguṇa-saṁcayagāthā, which Conze (*ibid.*) regards as the Aṣṭa's verse summary, also describes how someone travelling to the ocean is still far away from it if one 'sees the trees and forests of the Himalayas' (*ibid.*, p.27). Further, the instances (*ibid.*, e.g. pp.105, 278) of the word *pustaka* ('book') — a foreign word borrowed from Iranian — point to the North-West, in which Iranian-Indian interaction took place. In fact, it is not impossible to explain the Aṣṭa's passage that suggests its origination 'in the South'. If the author of the Aṣṭa operated in the North-West, the 'South' from his viewpoint may signify Buddhism's homeland, thus legitimising the composition of the text.

The above, perhaps, does not prove anything but at least it does tell us we cannot preclude the author of the Aṣṭa coming into contact with the Sarvāstivādin sectarian doctrines (as represented by the early Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma treatises).

CHARACTERISTIC DOCTRINES OF THE SARVĀSTIVĀDA

It is true that the Aṣṭa criticises the Vehicles of the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas frequently. It also belittles stūpa worship in preference to the cult of the book (G. Schopen, 'The phrase 'sa prihīvī pradeśāś caityabhūto bhavet' in the Vajracchedikā: notes on the cult of the book in Mahāyāna', *Indo Iranian Journal* 17/3-4, pp.147-81). This, however, does not necessarily mean that the Aṣṭa is arguing against the Sarvāstivāda. We must remember that neither the stūpa cult nor the Vehicles of the Śrāvakas or Prat-

ye kabuddhas was unique to the Sarvāstivāda. Rather, we must find reference in the Aṣṭa to distinctly Sarvāstivādin doctrines if we are to show that it is arguing against the Sarvāstivāda.

What, then, are the distinctly Sarvāstivādin doctrines that antedate the Aṣṭa?

First of all, let us look at the Sarvāstivādin *dharma* theory. This says that, although all things are impermanent, the basic elements of reality are real and substantial. The Sarvāstivāda refers to these substantial entities (*dravyasat*) as *dharmas*. They are the smallest reducible building blocks of reality. The idea of 'own-being' (*svabhāva*, used synonymously with *dravya*) was first articulated in detail in the Jñānaprasthāna (K. Mizuno, 'Abhidharma Literature' in G.P. Malalasekera et al, ed, *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* 1, fasc. A-Aca, Colombo 1961, p.70) — although it must already have been taken for granted in the Vījñānakāya, which advocates the real existence of phenomena in the three time-periods (see below). In the Theravāda, the notion of own-being does occur, but not at this early date and, when it does come up, it seems to be used in a different sense, indicating a 'characteristic nature, which is not something inherent in a *dhamma* as a separate ultimate reality, but arises due to the supporting conditions of other *dharmas* and previous occurrences of that *dhamma*' (Harvey, *op. cit.*, p.87).

Second, we should mention the notion of 'the real existence of phenomena in the three time-periods'. One of the cardinal points in the Sarvāstivāda, this notion was expressed in detail for the first time in the Vījñānakāya (Mizuno, *op. cit.*, p.70). According to this notion, the real essence of the *dharma* exists forever, in the past, the present and the future. Or, to put it another way, the knowledge of the past and the future must have objects that exist as substantial entities. Thus all three dimensions of time exist — a notion summed up in the phrase *sarvam asti* ('everything exists'). This was perhaps the Sarvāstivāda's attempt to ensure karmic continuity through time against the potentially undermining force of the idea of impermanence. This theory of time was vehemently criticised by the Theravādins according to the Kathāvatthu (p.115; tr. S.Z. Aung, *Points of*

³ *daksinapathe* (cf. R. Mitra, *Ashtasāhasrikā, a collection of discourses on the metaphysics of the Mahāyāna school of the Buddhists* (Devanāgarī script), Calcutta 1888, p.225). Many scholars, including Conze (*The Prajñāpāramitā Literature*, rev. ed., Tokyo 1978, pp.1-4), have suggested that the Aṣṭa was composed in the South.

Controversy, PTS, 1915, p.85).

Third, the foundations of what was to become the Sarvāstivāda theory of the seventy-five *dharma*s were laid by the Dhātukāya and the Prakaranaśāstra (Mizuno, *op. cit.*, pp.70-1). Prior to these treatises, Buddhism's classification of existing things had been undertaken by means of the five *skandhas*, twelve āyatanas, eighteen *dhātus* or four *smṛtiprasthānas*⁴. Now in the Prakaranaśāstra, for the first time, the Sarvāstivāda grouped all existing things into the following five categories in an effort to examine all elements of existence as a whole, rationally and objectively: *rūpa* (matter), *citta* (mind), *caitasika* (mental attributes), *cittaviprayukta* (various kinds of forces that activate the mind and matter) and *asamksṛta* (unconditioned) (*ibid.*). This classification was something new and must have been unique to the Sarvāstivāda at the time of the composition of the Aṣṭa. The Yogācāra's adoption of these five categories⁵ occurred later. As for the Theravādins, they came to use only four of the categories, leaving out the *viprayukta*.

The mental attributes (*caitasika*)⁶ were previously classified in the Dhātukāya into ten *mahābhūmika-dharma*s (general functions), ten *kleśa-mahābhūmika-dharma*s (general functions of defilement) and ten *upakleśa-bhūmika-dharma*s (minor functions of defilement). This in itself was a new classification, these terms occurring in that treatise for the first time. Now the Prakarana expands this category by adding ten *kuśalamahābhūmika-dharma*s (general functions of good). At this point, not all the *dharma*s of the *caitasika* of the later Sarvāstivādin list are included.

4 Although the Aṣṭa (Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom*..., *op. cit.*, pp.97, 205) enumerates the five *skandhas*, twelve āyatanas and eighteen *dhātus*, there is no evidence that this text was targeted against the Sarvāstivāda, since this classification is not unique to that school.

5 The numbers of *dharma*s counted within their classification are not identical to those of the Sarvāstivāda.

6 The term *caitasika* (Pāli: *cetasika*) occurs in earlier Abhidharma works, but without any systematic discussion of this concept.

Fourth, the Prakaraṇa also sets out another new classification. It classifies the *anuśaya* and *kleśa* into ninety-eight types of mental laziness (summary tr. of the Prakarana given in Pruden, *op. cit.*, vol.3, p.871).

Fifth, the Jñānaprasthāna, in Chapter 3 of Book 1, applies the twelve-link Conditioned Coproduction (*pratītyasamutpāda*) — which did not necessarily have the connotation of rebecoming before — to biological life. This school regards the first two links as belonging to the past life, the next eight to the present life, and the last two to the future life.

Sixth, as pointed out by Y. Kajiyama ('Transfer and transformation of merits in relation to emptiness', in Katsumi Mimaki et al., ed., *Y. Kajiyama, Studies in Buddhist Philosophy*, Kyoto 1989, p.8), the Jñānaprasthāna introduces the notion of transformation, which appears to go beyond the law of karma. The text describes an Arhat as pronouncing: 'May this action which should produce a retribution-in-joy be transformed and produce a retribution-in-life' (tr. by Pruden, *op. cit.*, vol.1, p.165). Kajiyama believes that this text played an important role in the formation of the idea of 'the transformation of merit'.

We have outlined some of the important doctrines that may be considered distinctly Sarvāstivādin at the time of the composition of the Aṣṭa. We turn now to the Aṣṭa itself and see if this text refers to any of these doctrines.

ARE THERE ANY CLEAR REFERENCES TO THE SARVĀSTIVĀDA?

First, let us look at the term *dharma* in the Aṣṭa. The text does employ this word a great deal, but does it use it with the distinctly Sarvāstivādin, technical, scholastic meaning, 'the smallest reducible building blocks of reality'? As a preliminary, we can readily eliminate about a third (according to our counting) of all the instances of the term *dharma* in the Aṣṭa, as they refer to either the teachings of the Buddha, the Truth, or the Buddha-dharma(s) (qualities of the Buddha). Also included in this group are such expressions as dharma-bodies (Conze, *Perfection of Wisdom*..., *op. cit.*, e.g. p.116; Skt *dharmaśākya*) and dharma-eye (*ibid.* p.294; Skt *dharmaśākṣu*).

Among the remainder, there are some whose meanings seem

to be unclear. For instance, the expression 'dharma-element' (*dharmadhātu*) on pp.130-1 of Conze's *The Perfection of Wisdom* . . . seems to signify something 'quite perfect', almost synonymous in this context with full enlightenment. In the same passage, the expression 'dharmahood' (*dharmaṭā*) seems to refer to the 'dharma-element'. Further, we find such expressions as 'pure dharmas' (*ibid.*, pp.225-6; Skt *śukla-dharma*), but we do not know exactly to what they refer.

The remaining instances of the word *dharma* might be classified into two groups: (i) instances in which the referent of the term *dharma* is specified, and (ii) instances in which the *dharma* in general is referred to. Examples of the first group include: 'these dharmas of [a Bodhisattva]' (*ibid.*, p.186), which refer to a list of qualities such as 'has faith in [perfect wisdom], accepts it patiently, has a taste for it, has desire-to-do, vigour, vigilance, resolve, earnest intention, . . . serene confidence. . .' (*ibid.*, p.185)⁷; 'I do not, O Lord, see that dharma "Bodhisattva"; nor a dharma called "perfect wisdom"' (*ibid.*, p.84)⁸; 'this special dharma of an irreversible Bodhisattva [i.e. the non-abandonment of all beings]' (*ibid.*, p.227)⁹; and 'the irreversible dharma' (*ibid.*, p.230)¹⁰. When we compare these *dharmas* with the Sarvāstivādin list of *dharmas*, we see that only a very few — e.g., faith (*śraddhā*) — occur in both. For example, we do not find the *dharma* 'Bodhisattva' in the Sarvāstivādin list, nor do we find 'non-abandonment of all beings', or 'perfect wisdom' (although *prajñā* [also called *mati*] by itself is included under *mahābhūmika*), or 'acceptance of perfect wisdom', or 'having a taste for

it', or 'having desire-to-do', and so forth.

Before we move on, however, another example belonging to this group should be mentioned: 'dharmas which constitute thought' (*caitasika*) (*ibid.*, p.180; the same term occurs in the singular on the same page). *Caitasika*, as we have seen, is one of the five categories into which the elements of existence were classified by the Sarvāstivāda. Is this, then, evidence that the Aṣṭa is talking about the Sarvāstivādins? Not quite. As noted above, this term was used in early Abhidharma books prior to the Sarvāstivādin texts, and given that this passage in the Aṣṭa specifies neither the number nor the names of the specific *dharmas* concerned, we are not certain whether the specifically Sarvāstivādin *caitasika* is intended.

Turning to the second group, we find numerous descriptions of 'all *dharmas*' or of the '*dharma*' as such. We read, for instance, 'dharmas. . . are empty of their own marks' (*ibid.*, p.203)¹¹; they are illusory (*ibid.*, p.90), without own-being (*ibid.*, p.92), unproduced and unstopped (*ibid.*, p.86), not appropriable (*ibid.*, p.87), cannot be apprehended (*ibid.*, p.85), are not to be trained in (*ibid.*, p.87) or settled down in (*ibid.*, p.152), are beyond pairs of opposites (*ibid.*, p.193), are not turned over to full enlightenment (*ibid.*, p.128), are calmly quiet (*ibid.*, p.262), do not interact with anything (or 'isolated') (*ibid.*, p.259), are the same as Suchness (*ibid.*, p.176), and so forth. All this certainly appears to be denying the substantiality of the *dharma*.

Among other noteworthy statements concerning the *dharma* are that 'all dharmas are unconditioned' (*ibid.*, p.152)¹², and that the limitation of all *dharmas* is the same as Nirvāṇa (*ibid.*, p.189). In the Sarvāstivāda's classification of all elements of existence into five categories, four of the categories are grouped together under the label 'conditioned' (*samskrta*), whereas the remaining category is called 'unconditioned' (*asamskrta*). Thus, one might be tempted to say that the Aṣṭa is trying to undermine the

⁷ Skt: *śraddhāsti ksāntir asti rucir asti cchando 'sti viryam asty apramādo 'sty adhimuktir asty adhyāsayo 'sti . . . prasādo 'sti* (Mitra, *op. cit.*, p.287).

⁸ na aham bhagavams tam samanupaśyāmi yad uta bodhisattva iti / tam apy aham bhagavan dharmam na samanupaśyāmi yad uta *prajñāpāramitā nāma* // (*ibid.*, pp.4-5).

⁹ asāv avinivarttanīyasya bodhisattvasya mahāsattvasya āveṇiko dharmas (*ibid.*, p.379).

¹⁰ avinivarttanīyadharma (*ibid.*, p.386).

¹¹ svalakṣaṇaśunyair dharmair (*ibid.*, p.331).

¹² sarvadharmāśamskrtatām upādāya (*ibid.*, p.206).

Sarvāstivādin's differentiation between the conditioned and the unconditioned.

However, if the Aṣṭa is really targeted on the Sarvāstivāda, it is surely strange that this text has no reference to the *list* of the five categories: *rūpa* (matter), *citta* (mind), *caitasika* (mental attributes), *cittaviprayukta* (various kinds of forces that activate the mind and matter), and *asamkrta* (unconditioned). It is also strange that the Aṣṭa has no reference to any kind of sub-categories, such as *mahābhūmika*, *upaklesa-bhūmika* and *kleśa-mahābhūmika*. Nor does the Aṣṭa list the *dharma*s of any of those sub-lists, e.g., the ten *dharma*s classified under *mahābhūmikas*, as it might have done, given that one of the noteworthy tendencies of this text is to list things. Nor does this text ever mention any specific number of *dharma*s. We should not look for the number seventy-five in the Aṣṭa since, at the time of its composition, the Sarvāstivāda's number of *dharma*s had probably not yet been determined. Still, one would expect to find some specific numbers related to the *dharma* theory as set forth in the Prakaraṇaśāstra or the Dhātukāya.

So far, then, we have found no concrete evidence to show that this text uses the word *dharma* as the technical term of the Sarvāstivāda.

We turn now to the notion of the real existence of the three time-periods to which the Aṣṭa does seem to refer. The text says:

The past, future and present periods are not apprehended (*ibid.*, p.151)¹³.

If a person who belongs to the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas does not seize upon the past, future and present *dharma*s, does not mind them, does not get at them, does not construct, does not discriminate them. . . then his jubilation is in accordance with the true nature of those *dharma*s (*ibid.*,

p.133)¹⁴.

The past starting point of a material process [= form] is neither bound nor freed, because the past starting point of a material process is without own-being. The end of a material process, in the future, is neither bound nor freed, because the future end of a material process is without own-being. A present material process is [neither bound nor freed, because the present material process is] without own-being (*ibid.*, p.142)¹⁵.

There are three more passages that present a critique of perceiving the three time-periods as realities (*ibid.*, pp.87, 144, 270). One of these passages, in fact, seems to criticise this doctrine as well as the application of the Conditioned Co-production to biological life (or rebecoming), this latter being another characteristic doctrine of the Sarvāstivāda. The Sūtra says:

{Foolish, untaught, common people} construct all *dharma*s which yet do not exist. Having constructed them, they settle down in the two extremes. They then depend on that link as a basic fact, and construct past, future and present *dharma*s (*ibid.*, p.87; our emphasis)¹⁶.

Admittedly, we do not know if this passage is really talking about Conditioned Co-production, but it is perhaps worth noting

14 yadi subhūte bodhisattvayānikah pudgalo 'utānāgatapratyutpannān dharmān na gṛhṇīte na manyate nopalabhatे na kalpayate na vikalpayati. . . yathaiśān dharmānām dharmatā tathā 'numodate (*ibid.*, pp.161–2).

15 rūpasya subhūte pūrvānto 'baddho 'muktah // tat kasya hetoh / pūrvāntāsvabhāvam hi subhūte rūpam // rūpasya subhūte 'parānto 'baddho 'muktah // tat kasya hetoh / aparāntāsvabhāvam hi subhūte rūpam // prat�utpannam subhūte rūpam abaddham amuktam // ta kasya hetoh / prat�utpannasvabhāvam hi subhūte prat�utpannam rūpam // (*ibid.*, pp.185–6).

16 tasmāt te 'saṃvidyamānān sarvadharmān kalpayanti / kalpayitvā dvāv antāv abhinivisante / abhinivisya tan nidānam upalambhaṇ niśritya atītān dharmān kalpayanti anāgatān dharmān kalpayanti prat�utpannān dharmān kalpayanti (*ibid.*, p.15).

13 pūrvāntāparāntapratyutpannārthānupalabdhitā (*ibid.*, p.205).

that the following passage, which evidently deals with this doctrine, refers to the two extremes mentioned above:

... the Bodhisattva surveys conditioned coproduction in such a way that he avoids the duality of extremes (*ibid.*, p.271)¹⁷.

At any rate, as far as the notion of the reality of the three time-periods is concerned, we have some evidence that the Aṣṭa is arguing against the Sarvāstivāda. As to Conditioned Co-production, the text refers to it in three other passages (*ibid.*, pp. 199, 213, 216) which, however, provide no indication that they are concerned with the application of this doctrine to biological life.

Next, with regard to the Sarvāstivādin teaching of ninety-eight types of mental laziness (*anuśayas*), we have found no evidence that our text refers to this doctrine.

Our next concern is the notion of transformation. In the Aṣṭa, we find several passages (*ibid.*, pp.111, 136, 188, 196, 255) that speak of the Bodhisattva converting (or turning over) merit (or meritorious action or wholesome roots) into full enlightenment (or all-knowledge). This is somewhat similar to the Jñānaprasthāna's description of transformation, which was mentioned above. That which is to be transformed is something to do with merit in both texts. One problem, however, is that the Aṣṭa's notion of transformation cannot be equated with the transformation described in the Jñānaprasthāna. Another problem is that these Aṣṭa passages do not necessarily prove that the author of the Aṣṭa was influenced specifically by the Jñānaprasthāna. Although there may have been another text (perhaps a common source for the Aṣṭa and the Jñānaprasthāna?) that discussed the notion of transformation in terms more familiar than are to be found in the Aṣṭa, we cannot ignore these passages found in the latter.

CONCLUSION

By way of conclusion, we shall summarise the above discussion.

¹⁷ *iyan subhūte bodhisattvasya mahāsattvasya antar dvayavivarjita pratyasamutpādayavalokanā* (*ibid.*, p.469).

This paper has attempted to answer the question whether the Aṣṭa is arguing against the Sarvāstivāda, as has often been believed. First, we have acknowledged that there is some evidence that the Aṣṭa may have originated in the North-West and, therefore, we cannot, simply on geographical grounds, rule out the possibility of the Aṣṭa's author having access to the Sarvāstivāda's teaching.

Next, we have dismissed such statements as 'the Aṣṭa is targeted on the Sarvāstivāda since it is perpetually directed against Srāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas'. These terms could be applied to other pre-Mahāyāna schools, and not just the Sarvāstivāda. Instead, we have identified several distinctly Sarvāstivādin characteristics and tried to see if the Aṣṭa refers to these. Our logic is that if the Aṣṭa does refer to such characteristic doctrines of that school, then it means that the author of this text must have had access to the Sarvāstivādin teachings. Only then is it possible that the author might have been arguing against the Sarvāstivādins.

Noteworthy evidence we have found is that the Aṣṭa contains references to the Sarvāstivādin notion of the real existence of the three time-periods and criticises it. There is also some evidence that the notion of the transformation of merit may have been borrowed from the Sarvāstivāda.

However, as for the other characteristic doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda — the *dharma* theory, the ninety-eight types of mental laziness, and the application of Conditioned Coproduction to the context of rebecoming — we hardly have any evidence to show that the Aṣṭa refers to them. With regard to the *dharma* theory, the Aṣṭa does not refer to the Sarvāstivāda's five main categories of elements of existence, nor does it mention any specific number of *dharmas* as basic building blocks of reality — which is the technical sense of the Sarvāstivādin usage of the term. Rather, in the Aṣṭa's usage of *dharma*, the word almost seems applicable to anything whatsoever, not at all strictly limited to the smallest reducible blocks of reality. The text speaks of 'that dharma "Bodhisattva"' (*ibid.*, p.84), for instance. The number of *dharmas* in the Aṣṭa, moreover, seems virtually limitless.

To wind up, then, do we have much evidence to show that

the Aṣṭa is criticising the Sarvāstivāda specifically? Not really. It would appear that the evidence we *have* come up with is rather meagre when we consider the strident critique found in the Aṣṭa. This seems to suggest that even if the Sarvāstivādins were indeed one of the targets of the Aṣṭa's censure, they were probably not the main one. In fact, much of the Aṣṭa's criticism may well have been of an intra-Mahāyāna nature. Many passages in this text reproach Bodhisattvas who do not measure up to the standards or whose behaviour is harmful to the community (*ibid.*, e.g., pp.166-7, 230-3, 243, 245-7). The text also warns against spurious perfect-wisdom teachings (*ibid.*, e.g., pp.121-2, 170). Much criticism also seems to be directed against those who already subscribe to, and take for granted uncritically, such key Mahāyāna notions as the Bodhisattva ideal and the teaching of emptiness (*ibid.*, e.g., pp.83-4, 93-5, 176, 196-8).

Thus, when our text says, e.g.: 'It is hard to gain confidence in the perfection of wisdom if... has an inferior kind of wisdom, relies on bad friends...' (*ibid.*, p.142), we cannot automatically assume that these 'bad friends' are Sarvāstivādins. They could be people who are trying to follow the path of the Bodhisattva but perhaps without proper understanding, or people who belong to some other school.

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE BRAHMANAVAGGA

Chr. Lindtner

The major point I wish to make is that the Brāhmaṇavagga, the forty-one verses of the final chapter of the Dhammapada, can be seen as a sort of commentary, or a bit of exegesis, on one of the most famous of all Vedic hymns, viz. Rgveda 10.129. The text and an annotated translation of RV 10.129 is easily available, e.g. in Arthur Anthony Macdonell's *A Vedic Reader for Students*, Oxford 1917, pp.207-11. There are also excellent commentaries, e.g. by Paul Deussen in the first volume of his *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, Leipzig 1906; and Karl Geldner, *Der Rigveda in Auswahl*, Stuttgart 1907-09; W. Norman Brown, *India and Indology*, Delhi 1978.

The Pāli text of Dhp has often been published, most recently by O. von Hinüber and K.R. Norman for the Pali Text Society, Oxford 1995, pp.108-20. Close parallels are found in the text of the Patna Dharmapada (PDhp) edited by Gustav Roth in *Die Sprache der ältesten buddhistischen Überlieferung*, Göttingen 1980, pp.78-135, where the Brāhmaṇavargah, consisting of sixteen verses, is found on pp.100-2. Parallel verses are also found in the Udānavarga (Uv) edited by Franz Bernhard, Göttingen 1965-68, and in John Brough, *The Gāndhārī Dharmapada*, London 1962 (GDhp). All the parallels are listed by von Hinüber and Norman, who also provide a Bibliography of Editions, Indexes, etc. (*op. cit.*, pp.ix-xv). See also K.R. Norman's contribution in BSR 6, 2 (1989).

To save space, I assume that these works, as well as the CPD, PTC, PED, Böhtlingk and Roth's *Sanskrit Wörterbuch* and Grassmann's *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda*, and all the other indispensable standard works are within the reader's easy reach.

What I shall try to do is to read the Brāhmaṇavagga of Dhp, etc., in the light of RV 10.129 and show that, by doing so, we shall not only come to a better understanding of several otherwise obscure and vague verses but, moreover, gain a better general perspective on fundamental aspects of early Indian Buddhism, which indeed can be said to be a reformation of traditional

Brahmanism.

The general scope of the Brāhmaṇavagga is to establish what its author (or compiler) expected from a true brāhmaṇa, who was also a true bauddha. In other words, if we really want to understand Brahmanism, we must turn to Buddhism.

1 (= 383). The true brāhmaṇa is advised to 'cut off the stream', *chinda sotam*. PDhp had trouble with the meaning of *sota*, Sanskrit *srotas*, stream, flood, current, and instead read *sūtram*. In RV 10.129 everything, in the beginning, was water. Eventually, due to *kāma*, there was a *visṛṣṭi*, a discharge of water, the stream of creation. In this verse, the first of our final chapter, the author asks the true brāhmaṇa (who would have known the hymn by heart) to split, to cut off this stream and to drive away the *kāma* that somehow, as we say, brought it about as a *visṛṣṭi* — *cāme panuda!* In this way he will understand the destruction of the *samkhārās* and thus come to know *akata*, the uncreated. The uncreated that was 'there' before 'creation' is, in RV, called *tad ekam*, the One. It is only later on, due to *kāma*, that it is born and comes into being. Consistently, the parallel verse in Uv 9.1 says the *muni* must drive away *kāmān* before he *ekatvam adhipacchati*. — Now, what is the precise meaning of *samkhārā* (plur.)? Is it historically the same as *samskārāḥ*, from *sam-* and the root *kr*? If so, here it is a collective term for all the 'forces' responsible for bringing *tad ekam* into manifestation. Or should *sam-khāra* be related to e.g. *khāra*, a measure of grain? In any case, the term should probably be related to the obscure verse 5 of RV 10.129, which speaks of a cord, of impregnators, of powers, of energy, of impulse. It is, I suggest, to this that we can trace the source of the difficult Buddhist notion of *samkhārā*. When a true brāhmaṇa, or bauddha, knows their destruction he also realises *tad ekam*.

2 (= 384). The verse is virtually unintelligible as it stands. What does it mean for a brāhmaṇa to be *pāragū*, to have mastered, *dvayesu dhammesu*. The Pāli commentator (Brough, p.180) suggests *samatha-vipassanā*, but on what grounds? The PDhp has a meaningless *yayesu* for *dvayesu*. What is meant by what literally must mean 'double dharmas'? The few entries given in

PED, s.v. *dvaya*, suggest that the reference is to pairs of opposites such as true and false, being and nonbeing, positive and negative, and the like. This would make perfect sense here, where the brāhmaṇa is expected to master, or go beyond, dharmas that are opposites. In the light of RV 10.129.1, the solution is simple: the brāhmaṇa is expected to go beyond *asat* and *sat*, life and death, i.e. back to *tad ekam*. This interpretation would, of course, bring 384 into harmony with 383, as we have seen above. What, then, are *sabbe samyogā?* The simplest explanation is plain and literal, namely all the combinations of *sat* and *asat*, i.e. all the double dharmas, that *loka* usually relies on (PED, s.v. *dvaya* for ref.). To do so, the brāhmaṇa must have *jñāna* — what later on is known as *advayajñāna*. See 21 (= 403).

3 (= 386). The true brāhmaṇa is now *visaññuta*, or *visamyutta*, he no longer combines the opposites just mentioned. His fear — of Samsāra — is therefore gone. There is neither this shore nor that shore, namely of the ocean of Samsāra, for when *tad ekam* breathed, windless, by its own power, there was nothing beyond other than that, RV 10.129.2. It is only after the *visṛṣṭi* that we can speak of an ocean, that of Samsāra — where *sat* and *asat*, life and death, 'flow together'. Only then, after the manifestation of *tad ekam*, can one make a *dvaya* of *pāram* and *apāram*. This is because one, due to *kāma*, etc., has no *advaya-jñāna*.

4. (= 386). The brāhmaṇa is now settled, he has done what he had to do, he has attained the *uttamattha*, i.e. *tad ekam*, the *ekatvam*, as suggested above. (The *uttamārtha* reminds us of *paramārtha* (*satya*), later on identified with Nirvāna, *tad ekam*, etc.) When the brāhmaṇa now is *anāsava*, this means that the waters of *visṛṣṭi*, literally, no longer flow upon him. He is no longer perturbed by the fluctuating waters of Samsāra. He is without fear, as above. — What *viraja*, usually translated by 'free from dust or impurity, pure, blameless', and the like, precisely means is not obvious. If we relate it to Sanskrit *rajas*, mist, vapour, the image of the true brāhmaṇa not being affected by the waters of creation can be retained. Likewise, if we understand *jhāyi(n)*, as from *jhāyati*, to burn, to dry up. To 'meditate' here means to dry up the waters in the stream of Samsāra.

6 (= 387). The words *jhāyī tapati brāhmaṇo* support the above; a real Buddhist shines or burns when he 'meditates'. A Buddha does all days and all nights by his *tejas*, we now learn. In RV 10.129.3, we read that *tad ekam* arose through the greatness, or power, of *tapas*. To begin with, there was 'no beacon of night, nor of day' (v.2). Vaguely we see the Buddha is now associated with *tad ekam*, through the power of *tapas*. (Later on *tad ekam* is identified with Brahman, of course, and Brahman with the Buddha, or his Dharmakāya.) There may also be an allusion to the Buddha as the sun and, as is known, it is a common Vedic idea that the Sun is Brahman. The Buddha, in brief, is gradually replacing Brahman, just as the true brāhmaṇa, the Buddhist monk, is replacing the common (false) brāhmaṇa.

6 (= 388). Develops the idea that a brāhmaṇa must be defined in terms of human virtues. The use of *attano* — his, or of his soul — raises the old issue of whether there is room for a soul of sorts in Buddhism. In view of verses such as PDhp, *attā hi attano nātho attā hi attano gati*, I would find it reasonable to maintain that ancient 'Vedic Buddhism' accepted the soul, in much the same way that the final verse of RV 10.129 suggests that there is an *adhyakṣa* in the highest heaven who knows, or does not know. There can be a *mala* on the soul, as there is a *mala* on silver, cf. 239, or on the clear sky. This would be the Buddha, naturally, who in one sense knows, in another sense does not know (for more on this see my paper 'From Brahmanism to Buddhism' (*Asian Philosophy* 9,1 (1999), pp.5-37). In other words, Vedic Buddhism admits a world soul, unborn, and wrongly identified with the empirical person, etc. After all, the Buddha is also a Mahāpuruṣa.

7 (= 389). Somewhat of a crux, cf. Brough, p.179. (Could, for instance, the second *dhi* be the common Vedic substantive, related to the *dhira*, used fourteen times in Dhp?) In Fausbøll's barbarous Latin: Ne (quis) brāhmaṇae vim inferat, ne in illum se mittat brāhmaṇas; vae ei, qui brāhmaṇam cædit, dein vae (ei), qui in illum se mittit. — If we presume that the verse fits into the context, the point seems to be that under no circumstances should there be violence. Same idea *passim*, e.g. in 270, q.v. (From its very beginnings, Buddhism is an *ahimsā* movement, so to speak!)

It would thus also be keeping in context with the following verse: 8 (= 390). Has been misunderstood by all commentators, but Brough correctly suggests reading *hi 'ssa mano* for Dhp *himsamano* — an error that can be explained in the light of what was said above under 389. — The verse really starts with a question. It asks: Is *etad akiñci* not better for a brāhmaṇa (than the alternative suggested in 389 — especially if we understand *tato dhī yassa muñcati* to mean — then, if one kills his body, it is his mind that is liberated)? The *etad akiñci* means *nisedha* of *manas*, which is simply *yoga* (*cittavrittinirodha*). The reason (suggested by *hi*) is that his mind then ceases its activity, and this in the end means the cessation of 'suffering'. Taken together, 389 and 390: The mind of a brāhmaṇa can become free if his body is killed, but it is better if it becomes free through *yoga*, *nisedha manaso*. (The idea of liberating other living beings by killing them was held by the proverbial *samsāramocaka*.) — But there is more. Throughout the Brāhmaṇavagga there is a focus on *kāma* and *manas*. This, I suggest, should be traced back to RV 10.129.4: 'Desire in the beginning came upon that, (desire) that was the first seed of the mind'. There is a close causal relationship between *kāma* and *manas* — the Buddhist texts also speak of *trṣṇā* and *avidyā* — mind is created by *kāma*, but it is also mind that submits us to *kāma* (often in the plural: *manasā hi kāmān kāmayate*, Brh. Up. 3.2.7; cf. also Manu 1.75, where mind is urged by desire). Then there is the celebrated old *gāthā* ascribed to the Buddha himself: *kāma, janāmi te mūlam, samkalpāt kila jāyase* (e.g. Prasannapadā, p.350) — a distant echo of RV 10.129.4. The *sammati-m-eva* in the final line remains problematic. Interestingly, some of the versions relate it to *saṃvṛti-satya*, the *kun rdzob bden pa(r zad)*, of which Dhp has no idea at all. On the other hand, it would not be impossible to bring such an idea into harmony with RV 10.129.3: In the beginning darkness was hidden by darkness... the One was covered with the void... — If we take *saṃvṛti(satya)* as that which somehow hides, or covers, *tad ekam* (or with which *tad ekam* covers itself), we also understand why *tad ekam* cannot be clearly distinguished. First the cover has to be removed, and this happens through *yoga*, by stopping the winds of the minds.

9 (= 391). Nothing remarkable here apart, perhaps, from the odd phrase about being 'controlled in three things' (viz. *kāya*, etc.). May be an allusion to the three Vedas: It is better to be controlled in these three things than to know the three Vedas.

10 (= 392). The worship of the Buddha, as a teacher of Dharma, replaces the worship of Agni.

11 (= 393). What defines a true brāhmaṇa is the presence of *satya* and *dharma*. Likewise in 261, which to *satya* and *dharma* adds *ahimsā*, etc. It is an old Vedic idea that *satya* and *dharma* were among the first to come into being. The two are closely related and often appear as a pair. The immortal Person who consists of *dharma* and *satya* is the Immortal, this Brahman, this All, according to Br̥. Up. 2.5.11-12. Combined with the old idea that Dharma requires four 'feet' to make it complete (*caturbhadrā*), we have the Buddhist Dharma being taught in the form of four Aryan truths. The one who thus teaches *dharma* and *satya* is the 'immortal Person', who is also 'this Brahman', i.e. the Buddha. — And so again we see that it is quite literally meant when old canonical texts refer to the Buddha as one who knew the Vedas and even Vedānta (for further ref. see S. Radhakrishnan, *The Dhammapada*, Oxford 1950, p.29, n.1.).

12 (= 394). All translators known to me have failed to make sense of the line *abbhantarān te gahanam bāhirām parimajjasi*. Radhakrishnan, e.g., suggests: 'Thine inward nature is full of wickedness; the outside thou makest clean'. Rau suggests *garaham* for *gahanam*, probably to avoid having to twist *gahanam* into meaning wickedness, or the like. Fausbøll is literal: interna tua impervia (sunt), externa terges. — All problems immediately vanish once we read the words in the light of RV 10.129.1 — the *gāhanam gabhirām* — the unfathomable, profound, i.e. *tad ekam*. It is silly to be so concerned with one's external appearance when the 'ultimate meaning' that really counts is to be found inside, in one's heart, as RV 10.129.4 explains. The ref. is further corroborated by 21 (= 403), q.v.

13 (= 395). The verb does not necessarily require an object, but it is surely tempting to take *jhāyantam* with *ekam*, meaning *tad ekam*, corresponding to phrases such as *ekattam upajjati*, or

ekatvam adhigacchati (see Brough, p.120, for ref.). This interpretation would bring 395 into closer connection with 394, and vice versa.

14 (= 396). To be *akimcana*, said of the true brāhmaṇa, means more precisely that he is concerned with the *etad akiñci* in 8 (= 390). He is not merely 'free from goods'. That he is also without *ādāna* means that he is *dvayesu dhammesu pāragū*, as in 2 (= 384).

15 (= 398). Same idea as in 14 (= 397). Note that once he has cut the mental combinations that make up *sarva*, he is free from the fear of *Saṁsāra*.

16 (= 398). The description fits a warrior, such as Indra, better than it fits a buddha. The *vira* of the GDhp may, therefore, be a more original reading. — The following verses stress the point that it is not birth but behaviour that makes a man a true brāhmaṇa.

20 (= 402). It is understood here that the 'burden' of the soul is 'suffering', i.e. the set of five skandhas.

21 (= 403). That the brāhmaṇa has *gambhīrapañña* can, of course, simply mean that he has *mahāpañña*, as in 352. But it can also mean, if we keep RV in mind, that he knows the *gāhanam gabhirām*, cf. 394. Since *gambhīra* is regularly used of the Buddha and his Dharma (the Buddhist understanding of *tad ekam*), see PED, p.245, it seems natural to assume that there is a specific connotation also here. The old compound also occurs several times in Sn.

29 (= 411). Here *amatogadham* replaces *uttamattham*, see 386 and 403. CPD I, p.390, translates the term as 'the bottom or depth of nibbāna', or 'the depth of immortality'. But the background of the image is not explained. Assuming, again, that the *gāhanam gabhirām* is implied, there is no problem. On the contrary.

32 (= 414). The implied object of *anupādāya* would be the burden of the *duhkha-skandha*, the five skandhas that constitute the 'narrow space' (*duhkha*), loosely rendered as suffering. The original connotation of *duhkha* is that of limitation, confinement, suggesting the uneasiness of claustrophobia. — If it is true that

the Pāli *nibbuta* corresponds to the Sanskrit *nirvrta*, it would also be easy to see why the true brāhmaṇa now is, literally, 'uncovered': he has reached *tad ekam* which is no longer 'covered' by darkness, etc., as suggested in RV 10.129.3. The word *nibbuta*, then, should not be etymologically related to *nirvāna*, which literally can only be 'no wind'. The word *nirvāna*, which is not Vedic, probably has its background in the *avātam*, the windless, said of the One that breathed, in RV 10.129.2. The phrase *anupādāya nibbuto* thus means that one is free, for one no longer takes up anything (the burden of the skandhas) as a cover that confines.

35 (= 417). What is a human yoga as opposed to a divine yoga? Generally, in our text, it means an activity, mostly deliberate, that produces a result, positive or negative. See the index locorum in the PTS edition. Here, it seems to imply lack of normal, mental activity.

39 (= 421). Again, an allusion to meditation. Mind does not hang onto anything.

41 (= 423). The final verse of the Brāhmaṇavagga may be seen as a Buddhist counterpart to the final verse of RV 10.129, which spoke of the Surveyor in highest heaven who knows, or knows not. The true brāhmaṇa also sees and knows. The Buddha is the great Seer.

With these observations I have tried to show that several canonical Buddhist words and ideas can only be properly understood when we keep certain Vedic passages in mind. Today, when Buddhology is often treated as a discipline in its own right, it is good to be aware that it must never be separated from the broader Indian context in which it actually developed and to which it properly belongs. This simple truth is not seldom overlooked, even by the buddhas themselves.

For further arguments in support of the thesis here propounded, please refer to my paper referred to above in *Asian Philosophy*.

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BUDDHISM IN THE TANG PERIOD*

Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer

INTRODUCTION

There are two quite contradictory opinions on the Buddhism of the Tang period: according to one, the Tang period was the heyday of Buddhism in China¹, while the other view denies this, at least as regards the relation of church and state². In actual fact, from the point of view of Buddhism, the Tang was a difficult period, but from the point of view of Chinese and Japanese historiographers of the Buddhist schools, it was a period of variety in which much flourished: the practice of translation, architecture and economic prosperity and many other fields, and also a period of intellectual new beginnings originated or stimulated by Buddhism. And just as this period is variously represented from the point of view of Buddhists, so too the various specialists who belong broadly to the (divided) Confucian tradition differ among themselves. In this tradition, many innovations of Neo-Confucianism are regarded as derived from Buddhism or as a reaction against it, or are at least seen as closely related to the Buddhism of the Tang period, while others lay stress on the independent nature of the Neo-Confucian developments. I can only refer here to the various paradigms underlying these viewpoints, and which belong to the classical

* Translated by Maurice Walshe from 'Der Buddhismus der Tang-Zeit, *Minima Sinica* 2, Bonn 1993, pp.98–116, and published with the permission of the original Editor, Prof. Dr Wolfgang Kubin.

1 This view is taken in most accounts of Chinese history or cultural history, but also in works such as that of Charles Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, Princeton N.J. 1986, who makes it the basic assumption of his account when he writes (p.5): 'T'ang was in all essentials a Buddhist state'.

2 See Stanley Weinstein, 'Imperial Patronage in the Formation of T'ang Buddhism; in *Perspectives on the T'ang*, ed. Arthur F. Wright, Denis Twitchett, New Haven and London 1973, pp.265–306 (here p.265).

inventory of Chinese historiography and the general Chinese self-view, without going into details or historical explanations³.

For those who speak of the difficult situation of Buddhism in this period, the decisive factor is that it was also a period of the greatest persecutions of this teaching, which had reached China hundreds of years previously by sea as well as overland along the Silk Road, and had become acclimatised there. But there were persecutions before, and it may be suspected that the later complaints about the persecutions of the Huichang period (841-6) are also a lament for the final loss of an élite culture, the aristocratic culture of the Chinese Middle Ages, which also manifested itself in Buddhism and Buddhist culture. Ambivalence towards one's own position in the subsequent literary stratum demanded, as it were, that one should regret the loss of all privileges of birth — which of course implied regretting the preconditions of one's own bureaucratic existence. So much for the more general themes of the later idealisations of the Tang period.

In the course of the Tang dynasty Buddhism changed in a quite fundamental way, and any account of the Buddhism of this period has to take this dynamism into account. The changes themselves were partly the result of altered power relations at court, and partly due to a changing attitude towards religious questions. But Buddhism itself had brought about various changes.

THE STARTING POINT. POSITION OF MONASTICISM AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TANG PERIOD

A Buddhist monk in China at the beginning of the Tang period, living in the capital Chang'an, celibate even if wicked tongues

spoke of misconduct in the monasteries, was not too badly off. He had never known the alms-bowl. There had been mendicant monks in other countries, but this custom had never established itself in China, which could be seen from the fact that anyone begging usually got a nickname like 'Leavings'⁴.

At the beginning of the dynasty things in general had not been too bad. The ruler of the previous Sui dynasty, Yang Jian, himself the product of the cloister, had in the twenty-four years of his reign, and with an eye on the influence of the clergy, allowed the ordination of 230,000 monks and nuns, and had 3,792 monasteries built and innumerable Buddhist scriptures copied and images erected⁵. But above all large sections of the population, particularly the aristocracy, were keen followers of Buddhism, and remained so. And, even though arguments against Buddhism were constantly raised, nobody had taken this very seriously.

It was clear that the new rulers of the Li family would have to continue to respect the position of the Buddhists. The only trouble was that the Taoists were beginning to gain on the Buddhists. The fact that state control, in the form of registration of monks and other restrictions, was increasing would have been acceptable if only the Taoists had been equally affected by it. That the founder of the dynasty Li Yuan (566-635), later known by the posthumous title of Tang Gaozu (r.618-26), had declared for Taoism before seizing power, was to begin with also nothing special: Liang Wudi (r.502-49) had gained power with the aid of Taoist propagandists, and yet had he not, as Emperor, oppressed and even persecuted the Taoists, and persistently supported the

³ Some thoughts on this can be found in my article 'Ausdehnung der Weit und innerer Verfall' [Extensions of the World and Internal Decline] in *China und die Fremden. 3000 Auseinandersetzung in Krieg und Frieden*, ed. Wolfgang Bauer, Munich 1980, pp.77-113, and in 'Vielfalt und Einheit — Zur integrationistischen Tendenz in der Kultur Chinas' [Multiplicity and Unity — on the Integrational Tendency in Chinese Culture] in *Kultur — Begriff und Wort in China und Japan*, ed. Sigrid Paul, Berlin 1984, pp.123-41.

⁴ On this see Richard B. Mather, 'The Bonze's Begging Bowl: Eating Practices in Buddhist Monasteries in Medieval India and China', in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 101:4 (1981), pp.417-24.

⁵ Takakusu et al. (eds), *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 52.509b (*Bianzheng lun*); on the relation between Buddhism and the state in the Sui period, see Arthur F. Wright, 'The Formation of Sui Ideology, 581-604', in John K. Fairbanks, ed., *Chinese Thought and Institutions*, Chicago/London 1957, pp.71-104; *id.*, *The Sui Dynasty*, New York 1978.

Buddhists?⁶ But now the ear of the ruler was primarily turned towards the Taoists and their prophecies, which were indeed attached to conditions, such as the building of temples and other favours of a material nature to the Taoists. And certainly it was not easy to accept the fact that the imperial family had taken it into their heads to claim descent from Laozi⁷. The resulting conflict between Taoists and Buddhists, however, occurred chiefly at court and in the capital, so that we have to distinguish between the position of religion in the provinces and in the capital.

PIETY AND CRITICISM OF THE MOBILISATION OF THE MASSES

However much we may speak of the state and the monks, we must not overlook the fact that in Tang China Buddhism was at least as successful a doctrine as it was an institution. As a teaching it provided intellectual satisfaction, but above all, it devalued life in favour of an other-worldly ideal, and gave to those in this vale of tears who had in any way suffered disappointment a hope of a better rebirth, which could be gained by the accumulation of merit. There were various ways to gain this accumulation: good deeds of all kinds, gifts to monasteries and charity, giving up fishing, and of course, above all else, obeying the rules. At the same time the idea arose that it was no-one's own merits that were decisive for liberation from the wheel of rebirths, but the grace of a holy being — an idea that found its proper shape in the Bodhisattva ideal⁸. But even so, the piling-up of merit remained an essential element of piety. This concept

later took shape in the tendency of the so-called Neo-Confucianism to keep a daily register of good deeds and failings⁹. A favourite way of increasing one's merit was to print a text in as many copies as possible, or to recite it or have it recited; this preference was not without its influence on the development of printing in China.

Other voices were also heard from those who took exception to the charismatic features of the Buddhist doctrine and who, turning away from the cult, adopted a more down-to-earth position. Among these were many Confucians, in particular Han Yu (768–824), but also Buddhist supporters themselves¹⁰. This similarity of basic attitude between those who were later to be venerated as re-awakeners of Confucianism and fathers of Neo-Confucianism, and prominent representatives of meditative Buddhism goes to show that the separate elements of the intellectual world of the Tang period are only parts of a close-knit and often intertwined whole, so that even Buddhism cannot be clearly distinguished as a separate and isolated element of that period.

To critics like Han Yu, the whole order of society seemed imperilled. He was not concerned about piety itself, but by the possibility of a shift in power through mass movements, such as the veneration of a bone of the Buddha, against which he campaigned. However, in spite of the persecutions of institutional Buddhism, the factor of mass enthusiasm remained constant in Chinese politics in the following centuries¹¹.

⁶ On the relation between clergy and rulers in Liu-chao China, see Anna Seidel, 'Imperial Treasures and Taoist Sacraments: Taoist Roots in the Apocrypha', in *Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques* XXI (1983), pp.291–371, esp. 348ff. — On Liang Wudi's relation to Buddhism see also Fang Litian in *Shijie zongjiao yanjiu* 6 (1981, fasc.4), pp.16–33.

⁷ On the tradition of the deification of Laozi and the descent of the Tang ruling house from him, see Anna K. Seidel, *La Divinisation de Lao Tseu dans le Taoïsme des Han*, Paris 1969.

⁸ On this see the collective volume of Leslie S. Kawamura (ed.), *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhism*, Waterloo, Ont. 1981.

⁹ On this see Chün-fang Yü, *The Renewal of Buddhism in China: Chu-hung and the Late Ming Synthesis*, New York 1981.

¹⁰ The famous appeal to the throne by Han Yu against the worship of the Buddha's finger-bone in the capital, and the following events, are reported by the Japanese monk Ennin in the account of his travels; he gives a vivid account of religions in China. See also Edwin O. Reischauer (tr.), *Ennin's Diary, The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law*, New York 1955, and *Ennin's Travels in Tang China* (*ibid.*).

¹¹ Attempts at investigating religious mass movements have been made in various ways, but there is still no systematic and methodically reflective study.

1. The State and the Administration of Monasticism

FU YI'S ATTACK, CA 620 CE

In 621 the Grand Astrologer (*taishiling*) Fu Yi (555-639) presented for the first time a submission to the throne declaring in eleven points that Buddhism ought to be abolished. There had been similar attacks previously, mainly from people who appealed to Confucius but were really afraid that their petty official posts and their authority might be limited through clerical privileges. Even though what Fu Yi, who was himself a Taoist priest and had already appeared as a persecutor of Buddhists under the previous North Zhou dynasty, was now instigating was very transparent, there remained grounds for anxiety because of the strong sympathy of the court for Taoism. The ruler had put Fu Yi's arguments — well known from previous Taoist-Buddhist debates and somewhat hackneyed — to a commission of Buddhist monks, who compiled several refutations, of which Falin's *Poxie lun* ('Rejection of Errors') is the most important¹².

At first Fu Yi even gained some successes, as when in 621 Li Yuan, in the course of his campaign of pacification in Eastern China, decreed that in the prefectures where disturbances had taken place only a single Buddhist monastery with a maximum of

New works on this subject are by Daniel Overmyer and Masaaki Chiōusa. One sign of the invasion of politics by populist elements is the prophecy-books of the 10th century, such as the *Tuibetus*. With this populist element, a completely new factor appeared on the Chinese imperial scene. This led to a new conflict between proclaimers of salvation, which was finally settled in a particular way by the development of a theory of the Three Teachings. This began in the Tang period, but was only fully developed in subsequent centuries. For the Three Teachings theory in the Tang period, see Liu Ts'un-yan, 'The Syncretism of the Three Teachings in Sung-Yüan China', in Liu Ts'un-yan (ed.), *New Excursions from the Hall of Harmonious Wind*, Leiden 1984, pp.3-95.

¹² Taishō (cf. n.5) 52, No.2109. On Fu Yi's arguments against Buddhism, see Arthur F. Wright, 'Fu I and the Rejection of Buddhism', in 'Chinese Reactions to Imported Ideas. A Symposium', in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 21.1 (1951), pp.31-74, esp. 33-47.

thirty monks was allowed. Fortunately, however, the ministers could not quite agree on the policy to be adopted towards the different religions. As late as 625 Li Yuan had described Taoism and Confucianism as the pillars of the state and Buddhism as merely a foreign doctrine, but public debates led him, only a year later, at least outwardly to treat both teachings, Taoism and Buddhism, on an equal footing. But in reality the Buddhists were to be more severely affected by the measures because, of the 120 Buddhist monasteries existing in the capital at the beginning of the seventh century, 117 were to be closed, while only eight of the ten Taoist temples suffered the same fate.

However, only a month after this decree, when Li Shimin, Li Yuan's second son, forced his father with some bloodshed to abdicate, he withdrew his father's anticlerical decrees. In the reign of Taizong (r.626-49), Buddhism was actually favoured at first and used as a legitimization of the ruler, while at the same time being subjected to a stricter system of state supervision. All the same, Li Shimin retained some reservations concerning this religion out of the Far West. It was only towards the end of his life that he became drawn to Buddhism, prompted by the reports of the famous traveller to India, Xuanzang (d. 664 CE), who had also become his spiritual mentor in his last years. This turn of events stimulated the production of other works about India and the role of Buddhism in the world, such as the Vinaya monk Daoxuan's *Shijia fangzhi*, which was based on Xuanzang's report.

THE PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT OF BUDDHISM UNDER EMPRESS WU
The ninth son of Li Shimin, Li Zhi, his successor on the throne and known as Emperor Gaozong (r. 649-83), was at first influenced by Xuanzang; but it was only in 674, under pressure from Empress Wu, that an edict was issued putting Taoists and Buddhists once more on an equal footing. This was one of the decisive steps in Empress Wu's policy of declaring Buddhism the

state religion¹³. For, on account of the repeated restrictions on them, the representatives of this religion were in fact not totally committed to the preservation of the Tang dynasty, and were the most likely to work for the legitimisation of a new dynasty headed by a woman — something which China had not previously experienced. But it was only after the Empress had eliminated all her rivals, and when numerous omens appeared on account of the need for legitimisation, that, in the seventh month of the year 690, a group of ten Buddhist monks presented her with a copy of the 'Great Cloud Sūtra' (*Dayun jing*)¹⁴, assuring her that she was the long-awaited Saviour-Buddha Maitreya and that the Mandate of Heaven had passed to her. And in fact we find in the thirty-seventh chapter of this sūtra, which was translated into Chinese as long ago as 417, that 700 years after the Buddha's entry into Nirvāna a princess would be born who would be recognised and highly revered by the whole world, and who would lead her kingdom into a paradisiacal state. Even after Empress Wu's deposition and the continuation of the Tang dynasty under Zhongzong (r. 705-10), this policy was not changed. It was only under Ruizong (r. 710-12) that a change was introduced. First, the equality of the Buddhists and Taoists was proclaimed, and then, in the reign of Xuanzong (r. 712-56), the privileges of the Buddhists, but also those of the Taoists, were reduced step by step. In particular, the construction of temples and the custom of well-to-do families of nominally placing parts of their estates at the disposal of temples in order to avoid taxation were limited or forbidden. In spite of the restrictive policy towards the Buddhists, one particular branch of Buddhism was encouraged by Xuanzong, the Esoteric School (*Mizong*), presumably because it fascinated the

ruler with its rituals. And then, when at the end of 755 the An Lushan revolt broke out, the court once again sought support from the Buddhists.

BALANCING THE STATE'S FINANCES WITH CERTIFICATES OF ORDINATION

Because the Tang government needed to raise money by any means in order to meet military expenses, in 755 permits for monks' ordination were sold for the first time¹⁵. This measure was very successful and, in 757, in the region of the capital Chang'an alone, more than 100,000 people applied for permits.

At least as important for the development of Buddhism in China as the issue of monks' certificates was the fact that the civil war that raged in and around the capitals of Luoyang and Chang'an between 755 and 763 led to the destruction of the centres of the most important schools, so that the monks were scattered, and the lines of doctrinal descent were frequently interrupted. Another factor was that the patronage of Buddhism by individual military governors, who had through the An Lushan rebellion become the real rulers of China, led to the replacement of the former élitist and anti-democratic doctrines of the main schools by other, democratic or popular teachings, which appealed more to the simple heart, such as the practice of meditation and the Pure Land teaching. Thus, after the An Lushan revolt, the Faxiang school disappeared altogether, and the Vinaya school sank into insignificance, at least for the duration of the Tang dynasty. On the other hand, the Huayen and Chan schools flourished, corresponding to a new form of Buddhist religiosity, marked by strongly syncretistic tendencies. This movement was symbolised in especially striking form by Zongmi (780-841), who was a representative of both traditions, Huayen and Chan¹⁶.

¹³ On the relation between Buddhism and the state in the mid-Tang period, see in addition to S. Weinstein (cf. n.2), Tonami Mamoru in *Chūgoku chusei no shukyō to bunka, Jimbun kagaku kenyusho*, Kyoto 1982, pp.589-651.

¹⁴ On this action and the question of whether or not the sūtra was falsified, see full discussion in Antonino Forte, *Political Propaganda and Ideology in China at the End of the Seventh Century*, Naples 1976.

¹⁵ There are indications that such ordination permits had already been sold under Zhongzong and Ruizong. See *Zizhi tongjian* 209, p.6623.

¹⁶ On Zongmi, see n.21.

THE PERSECUTIONS OF THE HUICHANG ERA

The first steps against the Buddhists were taken in 842. This was above all due to Li Deyu. Since the 20s he had been the leader of one of the court factions, and from the position of various offices he had for years been inciting religious persecution, not only against the Buddhists, but also against all kinds of popular cults that were heterodox in his eyes.

In the following years many steps were taken, not only against the Buddhists, but against foreign religions, especially Manichaeism, ranging from laicisations through the confiscation or limitation of monastery or monks' property to the physical destruction of entire groups of monks. The persecution intensified after 844, when Wuzong came under the influence of the Taoist Zhao Guizhen. All forms of popular piety directed towards the Buddhists were forbidden; the clear purpose of this was the aim of the Taoists to gain a monopoly of religion. The peak was reached in 845, when Wuzong issued two edicts in the third month. According to these, all monastic possessions, including slaves, were to pass into the hands of the state and, further, no person under forty was allowed to be or remain in the status of a monk or nun. Whereas in 842 Wuzong had merely confiscated or restricted the private property of monks and nuns, and had only unfrocked such clerics as did not conform to monastic rules, this time the policy was directed against monastic property as such, and against all clerics, without regard to the sincerity of their efforts.

In the eighth month of 845 Wuzong justified his policy of destroying Buddhism and boasted of his successes:

- 4,600 monasteries closed
- 260,500 monks and nuns disrobed
- 40,000 chapels and hermitages destroyed
- Thousands of millions of *qing* of fertile land, and
- 150,000 former slaves put on the tax register¹⁷.

¹⁷ For these figures, see S. Weinstein, *Buddhism under the Tang*, Cambridge 1987. Cf. n.2 on p.134 and 199, n.111.

But Wuzong was struck down by an early death — he was not quite thirty-two when he died —, and with his successor, Xuanzong (r. 846-59), who was a supporter of the Buddhists, the state's policy changed again. True, in supporting Buddhism the new ruler had to proceed carefully because of the hostility to Buddhism evinced by some sections of the bureaucracy.

The last Tang rulers were mostly quite favourably disposed towards Buddhism and supported it, or were even keen devotees of this teaching. But it was not possible to achieve a complete restoration since, during the nine years of revolt, and especially the devastation caused by Huang Chao's campaigns (874-83), libraries had been destroyed and traditions shattered. In fact, these popular uprisings contributed more to undermining Buddhism than Wuzong's persecutions. For whereas at the time of the Huichang persecution many prominent members of the clergy had escaped by fleeing to the mountains, the widespread movement of revolt reached into the remotest corners of the kingdom¹⁸. In this way intellectual traditions were so totally submerged that many things were no longer understood in the tenth century, and many traditions could only be revived with the aid of Korean teachers. This explains, too, how it was that of all the Buddhist schools Chan survived the persecutions best, because its followers rejected scriptures and textual study and were not attached to objects, but concentrated on religious experience. The other school that survived this period and has remained to this day the second most important school after Chan was the Pure Land School, which relied on the saving grace of Amitābha.

The relation of Buddhism to the state during the Tang period, whether we read it in the official historians or the Buddhist historians, or especially in Buddhist apologetic literature, was one of increasing control by the court or by a government body of all religious matters. The extent of this control, and the degree of support or opposition involved, depended on which faction happened to have the upper hand, whether it was under the

¹⁸ See Weinstein, *Buddhism under the Tang*, op. cit., pp.148 and 204, n.17.

influence of Taoist circles, or else on the manner in which each particular ruler sought to legitimate his or her position.

However, anyone who might suppose that such a consideration of the relation of Buddhism and politics in the Tang period exhausted the subject would be failing to realise what Buddhism had to offer in that age. This was a multiplicity of spiritual, religious and artistic productivity and a wealth of scholarship and learning, so that despite everything we are fully justified in speaking of the 'heyday of Buddhism'. The Buddhism of the Tang period was also of importance for China because it shared in the intellectual changes of the eighth and ninth centuries, taking part in the various crises and reorientations that led to the development of Neo-Confucianism.

2. The World-view of the Scholar-Bureaucrats, and the Syncretistic Tendencies of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries

The uprooting and disappointment of the intelligentsia after the An Lushan rebellion in the mid-eighth century, with all its troubles and changes, led to a generation of a new stamp which marked the intellectual culture of the later Tang period and which is generally associated with the *guwen* movement. This new generation, to which Han Yu, Li Ao, Liu Yuxi and others belonged, was conditioned by the political measures and the establishment of new institutions in the realm of bureaucracy, such as in the field of taxation, which were initiated under the rule of Dezong (780-805)¹⁹.

Buddhism had played a considerable part in the reorientation of this generation, the Pure Land School as well as Chan, but especially the Tientai school, which had undergone a renewal through its ninth patriarch Zhanran (711-82) and which, especially through the *panjiao* theory, made it possible to regard the

¹⁹ For the intellectual changes resulting from the An Lushan revolt, see the still fundamental essay by Edwin G. Pulleybank, 'Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism in Tang Intellectual Life, 785-805', in *The Confucian Persuasion*, ed. Arthur F. Wright, Stanford 1960, pp.77-114.

Confucian teachings too as a particular expression of the true Buddhist teaching. This syncretism then reached its peak in the eleventh century in the Chan monk Qisong, who was a kind of Buddhist Neo-Confucian.

THE INTELLECTUAL TRANSFORMATION AND THE OVERCOMING OF 'SECTARIANISM' IN NEO-LEGALISM: ZONGMI (780-841) VERSUS HAN YU (768-824)

Two texts from the beginning of the century are clearly indicative of the intellectual transformations of that period: 'The Basis of Morality' (*Yuandao*), written by Han Yu in the summer of 805²⁰, and the 'Treatise on Man' (*Yuanren lun*), which Zongmi is supposed to have written as a reaction against it, as well as against Han Yu's 'Treatise on Human Nature' (*Yuanxing*)²¹. Among other things Zongmi says:

Among present-day scholars every one clings to his own school, so that among them, just the same as among students of Buddhism, not one knows what is really true. And so they don't ask about the fundamentals of heaven and earth, people and things. Here, I intend to investigate all phenomena according to Buddhist and non-Buddhist teachings, in order to go on from the provisional teachings from fundamentals and

²⁰ On this text, see Hartman, *op.cit.*, p.145ff.

²¹ A translation of this text, after the Taishō edition, vol.45, pp.707-10, is in Wm Th. De Bary, *The Buddhist Tradition in India, China and Japan*, New York 1969, pp.179-96. — Studies in a Western language on this text and on Zongmi's syncretism in general principally in Yün-hua Jan, e.g. 'Tsung-mi. His Analysis of Ch'an Buddhism', in *T'oung Pao* 58 (1972), pp.1-54; 'A Buddhist Critique to the Classical Chinese Tradition', in *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 7 (1980), pp.301-18; in Japan especially Shigeo Kamata has worked and published on Zongmi in recent years. — As regards the close relationship between late Tang Buddhism and the development of Neo-Confucianism, especially in connection with the later *xiangyue* cult, we should note texts such as Zongmi's 'Collection of Wine-Sacrifice Texts for Priests and Laity' (see Yün-hua Jan in *Huagang foxue xuebao* 4 (1980), pp.132-66).

roots²².

In his treatise, 'Basis of Morality', Han Yu identifies Buddhism and Taoism with the dissolution of all order and with escapism, contrasting this 'barbarism', as he calls it, with the teachings of the wise kings of old. This standpoint is not unconnected with the fact that the so-called Outer Court (*wai-ting*) had lost its power to the so-called Inner Court (*nei-ting*), the circle of counsellors consisting of eunuchs and clerics surrounding the ruler. Han Yu, whose position was later in essence shared by the scholar-bureaucrats, opposed this preponderance of power enjoyed by the Inner Court. Since any kind of compromise between these quite different teachings seemed impossible, and an enlightened syncretism could only obtain among the minority of the élite, the basic question for the constitution and political practice was: what was to be considered really Chinese and what, on the other hand, was to be regarded as really foreign and barbarian? Han Yu's attack on Buddhism as well as Taoism and the defence of these different teachings in a syncretic form can be understood as the clash between the Inner and Outer Courts at the turn of the eighth to the ninth century — a conflict which, as we have said, had not been abolished by the persecution of Buddhism in the Huichang period. The respect in which Han Yu was held from the eleventh century on is just as much an expression of the continuance of this conflict as is the reference by Buddhist historians of the Song period to Liu Zonguan's pro-Buddhist attitude.

I cannot here go fully into the question of Han Yu and the Neo-Confucianism of this time, especially what has been termed Neo-Legalism. I will just mention one other question which will certainly interest many of you. In fact some of you may have expected that I would only discuss this subject in my paper: the question of what sort of Buddhism survived in China in spite of everything, but especially, why it was just the Meditation School, Chan or Japanese Zen Buddhism, which reached its real peak and

its mass effect only in the late Tang period and the following centuries in China, and then spread to Japan and, finally, the whole world. Since I cannot here go into all the different branches of Buddhism, I will leave aside all reference to the survival of Buddhist rituals and popular piety, such as you find massively covered in the literature, and turn exclusively to the question of the origin and development of Chan Buddhism.

THE FORMATION OF THE CHAN SCHOOL, OR WHY IS THE TANG PERIOD CONSIDERED THE HEYDAY OF BUDDHISM?

The history of Chan Buddhism goes back to before the Tang period. Most older accounts are now dated in many ways, especially as regards the Tang period and the relation of the so-called Northern and Southern Schools²³. The essential point is no doubt that the Chan movement was basically an iconoclastic teaching which could dispense with texts and doctrines, images and all externals. True, the turning to that which was regarded as the essential soon received a philosophical justification, but the practice of Chan, the intentionally unlearned instruction by teacher to pupil, the transcendence of all one-sidedness and party commitment, the expectation of insight without expecting it or doing anything about it — all these elements have influenced

23 The best-known treatment is probably that of Heinrich Dumoulin, *Zen, Geschichte und Gestalt*, Bern 1959 [Engl. trans. by P. Peachey, *The History of Zen Buddhism*, London 1963]. Of older, still useful studies can be named the three volumes by Ueda Hakkuju, *Zenshū shi kenkyū*, Tokyo 1949. But above all, the works of Yanagida Seizan, including his standard work on early Chan historiography, *Shoki Zenshū shisho no kenkyū*, Kyoto 1967, the series edited by him 'Zen no goroku', and the articles, influenced by him, in English, have greatly advanced our knowledge of the history of Chan Buddhism. Of these, mention should be made of Philip B. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, New York 1967; John R. McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, Honolulu 1986. Other works on Chinese Buddhism were not unaffected by these intense researches, so that in the last twenty years our knowledge of the history of Buddhism in the Tang period has gained a new quality.

22 See De Bary, *op cit.*, p.181.

wide circles of the intelligentsia from the Tang period to the present day, and have not been without influence on their creations, as we can easily see in calligraphy and painting, but also in literary works. And so the poetic theory of Yan Yu, from the end of the eleventh century, which conditioned the form of subsequent literary criticism, is itself essentially conditioned by Chan Buddhism. It is from this tradition that we find judgements that we should consider emancipatory, and which strike us as quite improbable in the mouth of a Confucian, for instance when Yixuan (d. 866) says of a monk of the so-called *Linji* School who was active in the west of the modern province of Hebei:

Within and without, kill whatever gets in your way. If Buddha gets in your way, kill Buddha, if the Patriarchs get in your way, kill them, if the Arhats get in your way, kill them, if your father or mother gets in your way, kill them.

Nothing must influence one or upset one, and what seems like insensitivity leads, supposedly or actually, to enlightenment. But insight too has its snags, as, e.g., the verse in the sixteenth example in the *Wumenguan* points out:

If understanding is there, then all form a unity; if understanding ceases, then they all fall apart into many separate individuals.

If there is no understanding, then all form a unity; if understanding comes, then they all fall apart into many separate individuals²⁴.

Such sentences are often intentionally ambiguous, which is a mark of all aphorisms and so-called 'public cases' (*gongan*, Japanese *kōan*), and in the present case too quite different

translations of this verse are possible²⁵.

CONCLUSION

If we once again consider the role of Buddhism in the Tang period, it seems unclear why this period is described as a period of Buddhism. We could describe the Tang period with equal or greater justice as a period of Taoism. But from certain points of view the description of this period as Buddhist seems justified, namely because it was precisely Buddhism which acted as a catalyst for the social and intellectual development of this period. Not only was the old aristocracy strongly linked to Buddhism, it was also gaining ground precisely among the broad masses. In this way, the most varied groups and movements found their expression in the Buddhism of the Tang period, and so really first gave Buddhism its Chinese face. However, the later glorification of the Tang epoch as the heyday of Buddhism is just a cliché, just as the glorification in later times of Tang literature is a cliché, necessary for the self-pitying literary class for whom the ideal of the wise and perfect man had anyway become unattainable, and whose members, whether as officials or private persons, were discontented.

The Confucianisation of Buddhism, and the Buddhication of society can be seen in the fact that monks increasingly had themselves buried after death instead of being cremated according to the rule, while cremation gained in popularity among the laity.

Nonetheless, the wishful looking back to the Tang period is

²⁵ On *kōans*, see Isshu Miura, Ruth Fuller Sasaki, *Zen Dust. The History of the Koan and Koan Study in Rinzai (Lin-chi) Zen*, New York 1966. On the so-called *yulu* generally transmitting such *kōans*, see Yanagida Seizan, 'The Recorded Sayings Texts of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism', in Whalen Lai, Lewis R. Lancaster (ed.) *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet*, Berkeley 1983, pp.185–205. — How varied the interpretation of what Chan Buddhism is can be seen both in the different interpretative traditions as well as in general discussions. Example: Hu Shih's and D.T. Suzuki's articles in *Philosophy East and West* 3, No.1 (April 1953), pp.3–46.

²⁴ Translated after Walter Liebenthal, *Wu-men Hui-kai Ch'an-tsung Wu-men kuan. Zutritt nur durch die Wand*, Heidelberg 1977, p.73.

also the expression of the remembrance of a society with pluralistic tendencies, which found their peak in literature as well as in the development of Chan Buddhism. But this peak at the same time marked the end of this freedom, since the fundamentalism and rigorism which was inherent in Chan, and indeed in general culture, on account of the search for truth, was — again? — to become a decisive principle of all Chinese culture.

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EKOTTARĀGAMA (XXVI)

Translated from the Chinese Version by
Thích Huyền-Vi and Bhikkhu Pāsādika
in collaboration with Sara Boin-Webb

Eleventh Fascicle
Part 20
(A Spiritual Friend)

3. ¹Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in Śrāvastī, at Jetṛ's Grove, in Anāthapiṇḍada's Park. Then the Exalted One was expounding the Teaching, surrounded by an audience (*par-sad*) [consisting of quasi-] innumerable (*asamkhyeya*) [persons]. Simultaneously Dharmaruci² was alone in his quiet room, reflecting

¹ See T2, 597a22 ff.; Hayashi, p. 174 ff. Cf. Divy(V), pp. 152-7; Mvu(B), 194-6.

² For information on Dhammaruci based on the Apadāna, cf. DPPN I, p. 1148 f. In the remotest past Dhammaruci, then Megha by name, had become a monk under the Buddha Dipaṅkara, but left the Order again and even committed matricide. Consequently he went to Avīci and thereafter was born as a fish. Once, even as an animal, he heard merchants in distress at sea recite the Buddha Gotama's name for protection. The fish remembered Dipaṅkara's having prophesied the future Buddha, then died and was reborn in Sāvatthī. There once more he entered the Order of Gotama Buddha and, in due course, became an arahant.

The account in Mvu resembles that of the Apadāna, but interprets the expression *cirasya* (cf. below, n. 6) in a way differing from its meaning in Divy, viz. 'for a long time [to come]': The gigantic fish, on hearing the merchants in distress recite the Buddha's name, becomes so joyful and elated (*hr̥ṣṭo udagracitto*) that this karmically wholesome emotion results in the animal's rebirth as a human being; remembering / being mindful of the Buddha is beneficial to the world for a very long time to come (*sucirasya lokahita*, *ibid.* p. 196).

The Divy account opens with the story of the trade expedition of 500 merchants. On their way back a tempest puts their lives in great danger, and a giant *timitimimgila* is about to devour them. After invoking Śiva's, Varuṇa's and other deities' help in vain, they recite '*namo Buddhāya*'. Hearing this, the giant fish is struck with dismay and decides to refrain from devouring the merchants. The latter reach the coast of their homeland and proceed to Śrāvastī to pay homage to the Buddha. Having distributed all their riches, they are

wisely (*manasi-kr*). Fully concentrated he entered the absorption[s] and then] contemplated the body [which he had to put up with in his] previous [life]: In the middle of the Great Ocean it appeared in the shape of a fish that measured seven hundred *yojanas*³. Just as a strong man instantly bends and [again] stretches his arm, he immediately left his quiet room, proceeded to the middle of the Great Ocean and passed by a floating rotten [fish] carcass. On this occasion Dharmaruci uttered the following verses:

[There are] birth and death for countless aeons and
 [The duration of one's] wandering on in *samsāra* is
 Incalculable. Everybody is in search of happiness, and
 What is obtained is endless misery. Having seen again
 [One's former] body, how much less (*kim punar*) is there
 The need to create a [new] frame (*gr̥ha*)!
 [Once] all attachment (*samdhi*) has ceased, no further
 Physical frame will be found (*upa-labha*). [Once] the heart
 Is not involved at all in any action [pertaining to
Samsāra], no more clinging (*abhisvanga*) will be left

ordained bhikṣus and eventually realise arhatship.

In that part of the Dharmacyavadāna which the eds. of T, Hayashi and Lancaster refer to as being a parallel to the present EĀ section, events in the time of Dipaṇkara Buddha are narrated. Two brahmin youths, Sumati – i.e. Sumedha of the Pāli tradition – and Mati – i.e. Megha as mentioned in the Apadāna, meet Dipaṇkara. Sumati has strong faith in Dipaṇkara and humbly spreads out his long hair so as to prevent the Buddha's feet from touching the muddy ground. Simultaneously he resolves to become a Buddha in the distant future, and Dipaṇkara actually prophesies Sumati's realisation of Buddhahood. Seeing Dipaṇkara stepping on Sumati's twisted hair, Mati gets angry and exhorts the Buddha to take care. Thereafter he realises his fatal mistake and confesses it to Sumati. The latter suggests that both of them go forth into homelessness, and accordingly both are ordained as members of Dipaṇkara's Order. After the deaths of Sumati and Mati the former is reborn among a class of gods whilst the latter, in spite of his having been a bhikṣu, is reborn in hell. In conclusion, in the Jetavanavihāra, Gautama discloses that he was Sumati and Dharmaruci the angry brahmin youth Mati.

³ Cf. Apadāna II (Nālandā ed.), p. 67: *maccho āsim timiñgalo*.

Behind – to say nothing of this kind of frame⁴; [for] In Nirvāṇa there is surpassing (*adhika*) happiness. Scarcely had Venerable Dharmaruci uttered these verses when he disappeared [at the site of encountering the carcass], shifted to Śrāvasti, to the Jetavanavihāra⁵, and went to where the Exalted One was. On seeing Dharmaruci coming near, the Exalted One said: Excellent (*sādhū*) – Dharmaruci! Here after a long time⁶. – Indeed, Exalted One, replied Dharmaruci, here after a long time. – Now the venerable elders⁷ and all the [other] bhikṣus thought to themselves: This Dharmaruci [must] have permanently been staying near the Exalted One because just now the Exalted One has said, "excellent – Dharmaruci! Here for a long time". – Since the Exalted One knew what the bhikṣus were thinking to themselves and wishing to dispel [any possible] uncertainty (*vicikitsā*) [on their part], he said to them: It is not because of Dharmaruci that I have made the remark "here after a long time [and not 'for a long time']". [I have made it] for the following reasons:

In the past, countless aeons ago, the Tathāgata Dipaṇkara⁸ had appeared in the world, the Fully and Completely Enlightened One, the Blessed One, perfect in insight-knowledge and good conduct, world-knowing, the supreme Dharma-charioteer⁹, teacher of gods

⁴ Surely the floating rotten fish carcass seen by Dharmaruci is referred to.

⁵ Cf. Hackmann, p. 67a.

⁶ Cf. Apadāna, *ibid.* : *ciram Dhammarucīti*; Divy(V), 246, 3-4: *cirasya Dharmaruce... cirasya bhagavan*; Mvu(B), 195: *cirasya Dharmaruci sucirasya...*; see also above, n. 2. According to the context in Divy, *cirasya* means 'after a long time, at last'; it can also mean, as in Mvu, 'for a long time'.

⁷ After Hayashi, p. 174, n. 4.

⁸ Cf. Divy(V), 152, 5-6: *Dipaṇkaro nāma samyaksambuddho loka utpanno vidyācaranasaṁyaksambuddhaḥ sugato lokavid anuttaraḥ puruṣadamyasāra-thih sāstā devānām ca manusyānām ca buddho bhagavān*. As for *vidyācaranasaṁyaka*, EĀ has what agrees with the standard epithet *caranasaṁpanna*.

⁹ For the standard epithet *puruṣadamyasārathi* EĀ has: 道法御; as for 道法, 'Dharma', see Karashima, pp. 88, 146.

and men, the Buddha, the Bhagavat¹⁰. [He] was just on his way (*ā-pad*) to the great kingdom [known as] Padma, accompanied by a huge number of bhiksus, viz. altogether 148,000 persons. In those days the four assemblies (*parṣad*)¹¹ were so numerous that they could neither be counted nor estimated. The country's king, his ministers, civil servants, people from all social strata (*jāti*) came forward [with their contributions towards a] sacrifice (*yajñā*)¹² in favour of those who are indispensable¹³. At that time there was a brahmin by the name of Yajñada who lived in the foothills (*antika*) of the Himalayas. As far as secret signs, astronomy and geography were concerned, there was nothing he was not an expert in. He was also a past master at explaining scriptures and at scripts. Another speciality of his was the intonation of a sentence [consisting of] five hundred words and also [the science of describing] the marks of a great being (*mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇa*)¹⁴. He taught five hundred disciples untiringly, day and night, the scriptures [dealing with] Agni, Surya, Soma and the [deities pertaining to other] heavenly bodies. The brahmin Yajñada had a disciple whose name was Meghadundubhi¹⁵, whose features betrayed a very respectable descent (*janman*) and the colour of whose hair was light reddish-black. The brahmin Meghadundubhi was sagacious and far-seeing and [,once he had embarked upon something,] there was nothing he would not bring to a successful end. Whenever he saw Yajñada, he at once showed him his devotion (*bhakti*) and of all the sacrificial formulae (*mantra*) which a brahmin applied in those days he had perfect command.

¹⁰ Here not translated as 'the Exalted One' (世尊, *bhagavat*), because in this enumeration of a Buddha's epithets different Chinese characters for *bhagavat* are employed: 真祐 (cf. Karashima, p. 599).

¹¹ Cf. BSR 13, 1 (1996), p. 57, n. 7.

¹² Cf. Foguang, p. 3067, under 供養祭 .

¹³ From Divy(V), 152, 15 ff. it can be gathered that 'indispensable persons' are those who are experts in Vedic lore.

¹⁴ Cf. BHSD, p. 458 ff. (s.v. *lakṣaṇa*).

¹⁵ I.e. 雲雷 ; cf. Karashima, p. 568.

Then the brahmin Meghadundubhi thought to himself: Now all that is required studying I have fully mastered. – And again it occurred to him: He who[se knowledge] surpasses all that is included in the lists of texts dealing with the sciences (*śikṣā*) [relevant to] a brahmin's occupation, is [my] teacher [whose] kindness should be requited. As for myself, all that I had to study I have at present gained mastery of. Now I should requite my teacher's kindness. However, being poor and without any means enabling [me] to make offerings to my teacher, [I] should go off in all directions in search of the necessary means. – After this [musing] the brahmin Meghadundubhi went to the whereabouts of his teacher and said to him: As for the teachings (*śāsana*) pertaining to the sciences and expertise of a brahmin, [I] have mastered them now. As a matter of fact, he who[se knowledge] surpasses all that is included in the lists of texts dealing with the [brahminical] sciences and expertise, is [my] teacher [whose] kindness should be requited. However, being indigent and lacking gold, silver and [other] precious things enabling [me] to make offerings, now [I] would like to go off in all directions to ask for assets (*bhoga*) enabling[me] to make offerings to my teacher. – On [hearing these words] the brahmin Yajñada thought: This brahmin Meghadundubhi who is dear to me is always on my mind. Thinking that [one day] I shall die, I cannot [bear the very idea of our] being separated for ever, let alone [the idea of his] intention to abandon me today and go away. Now how should I proceed in order to keep [him] and make [him] stay? – Then the brahmin Yajñada said to Meghadundubhi: O noble brahmin, for one reason you do not yet know what a brahmin should have studied. – In front of his teacher Meghadundubhi asserted: The only thing I am intent on is the acquisition of knowledge (*āgama*). What is it that I have not yet studied? – Instantly Yajñada called to mind a recitation [consisting of] five hundred words (*pañcaśatavākpāṭha*) and told Meghadundubhi: Now there exists a text entitled Pañcaśatavākpāṭha. You may receive it. – [I] hope, Meghadundubhi replied, the teacher will be [so kind] as to instruct me; [I] would like to obtain the recitation. –

O bhikṣus, [the Exalted One interrupted his narrative,] you should know that after [Meghadundubhi's request] Yajñada taught his disciple¹⁶ [of his] the Pañcaśatavākpātha. Within just a few days [the latter] became proficient at [reciting the text until then unknown to him]. Thereafter the brahmin Yajñada said to his five hundred disciples: This brahmin Meghadundubhi is not really competent [as far as] teaching methods and comprehensive knowledge [are concerned]. This being the case, there is [someone, however, who] has made a name for himself; his name is >He who Surpasses in Prudence<, Nayātikrama¹⁷. This brahmin Nayātikrama possesses a most remarkable talent for astronomy and geography, and there is nothing he is not an expert in. He is a past master at explaining scriptures and at scripts. – When several days had elapsed, the brahmin Nayātikrama went to see¹⁸ his teacher and said: Now [I] am proficient in the methods of teaching the brahminical sciences. He who[se know-ledge] surpasses all that is included in the lists of texts treating the [brahminical] sciences, is [my] teacher [whose] kindness, therefore, should be requited. [But I have] to add that [I] am poor, lacking gold, silver and [other] precious things enabling [me] to make offerings to my teacher. Now I would like to go off in all directions in search of assets so as to attain my goal. If only [I could] get permission [to do so]. – As you think fit (*yasya kālam manyasi*)¹⁹, replied the brahmin Yajñada. The brahmin Nayātikrama bowed down [his head] at his teacher's feet, stepped backwards and (T2, 598a) left.

In those days not far from the [main] town of the great kingdom [known as] Padma a huge number of brahmins had gathered together at one place, viz. 84,000 brahmins, in order to participate in a

¹⁶ Translated after the reading proposed at T 597, n. 26.

¹⁷ Tentatively for 超術 . In the following, from the fairly long EĀ narrative it becomes clear that >He who Surpasses in Method / Prudence<, Nayātikrama, corresponds to Sumati in Divy whose becoming Śākyamuni Buddha eventually is foretold by the Tathāgata Dipamkara.

¹⁸ Lit.: 'again / to return'.

¹⁹ I.e. 汝知是時 ; cf. BHSD, p. 180a.

great sacrifice (*yajña*) and to discuss doctrinal matters. The chief [of all those brahmins assembled] was supposed to be well-versed in the outsiders' (*tīrthika*) chanting and explaining scriptures, knowledgeable about astronomy and geography and a past master at [explaining] extraordinary [phenomena such as] changes in the constellations. Everybody was eagerly occupied with amassing five hundred ounces of gold, one golden staff (*danda*), one golden jug for ablutions²⁰ and one thousand head of cattle [to be] presented to the foremost teacher [to be] ranked as the most [learned among all the brahmins]. [Near the border,] not far from the great kingdom [known as] Padma the brahmin Nayātikrama heard that all the brahmins, viz. 84,000 [persons], had gathered together at one place, that their proficiency was being tested [to find out who would] rank foremost so as to be given the five hundred ounces of gold... and the large [herd of] one thousand head of cattle. Then it occurred to the brahmin Nayātikrama: Now why do I beg from house to house? [I] had better go to that enormous gathering to participate in the proficiency contest. – So the brahmin Nayātikrama went to the venue of that giant assembly. When the large multitude of brahmins saw the brahmin Nayātikrama coming from afar, they all shouted at the top of their voices: Excellent! The [real] chief (*svāmin*) of the sacrifice [gathering]. Now [this function] proves immensely useful – so much so that Brahmā is descending in person. – All the 84,000 brahmins rose and went to receive [him]. With one accord [they] cheered: Welcome (*svāgatam*), Great Brahmā! – Being [accorded such tribute,] the brahmin Nayātikrama thought: These brahmins take me to be Brahmā; but I am not Brahmā. – So the brahmin Nayātikrama addressed the brahmins with the [following] words: Please stop, noble ones! Do not call me Brahmā! Have you not heard of Yajñada, teacher of so many brahmins [living] in the north, in the Himālayas, [whose] mastery of astrology and geography [is such that] there is nothing [he] does not [know]? – The brahmins replied: We have only heard of him, but²¹ we have never seen [him]. – I am, the brahmin N. introduced himself, his disciple Nayātikrama by name. – Then the brahmin N.

²⁰ Cf. Divy(V), p. 152, 13: *dandakamandalu*, 'water-jar with a handle'.

²¹ Translated after the reading of T 598, n. 2.

turned towards the chief of that mammoth assembly and said: How about an expert's showing me his expertise? – Now the chief of that gathering impeccably recited to the brahmin N. the [texts of] the Three Collections²². After that the brahmin N. again asked the chief: Are [you] able to recite the Sentence [Consisting of] Five Hundred Words²³? – I do not know what [you] mean, replied the chief – what is the Sentence [Consisting of] Five Hundred Words like? – O noble ones, requested the brahmin N., please listen attentively²⁴; [I] will recite the Sentence [Consisting of] Five Hundred Words [describing] the marks of a great being. –

O bhikṣus [, said the Exalted One], you should know that on that occasion the brahmin N. [showed his] proficiency in reciting the [texts of] the Three Collections and the Sentence [Consisting of] Five Hundred Words [describing] the marks of a great being. The 84,000 brahmins, overjoyed as never before, were all [agreed] that this was the first time for them to listen to the Sentence [Consisting of] Five Hundred Words [describing] the marks of a great being and that as from that moment "the Venerable" (*bhadanta*) [N.] should be ranked foremost and be [their] chief...'

²² Lit.: 'Tripitaka'; presumably in this context equivalent to the 'Three Vedas.'

²³ Perhaps identical with the Pañcasatavākpāṭha mentioned above; the EA text is not explicit about it, though.

²⁴ Lit.: 'silently'.

LANGUAGE AND FREEDOM: MEANING IN ZEN

REVIEW ARTICLE:

Dale, S. Wright, *Philosophical Meditations on Zen Buddhism*. (Cambridge Studies in Religious Traditions 13), Cambridge University Press, 1998. xv, 227 pp. £35, \$54.95. ISBN 0 521 59010 8.

John Crook

What is the place of Zen in contemporary thought, the relation of Buddhist metaphysics to philosophy and the value of ancient texts to thinking people today? These and related questions form the subject-matter of this intelligent, subtle and provoking book. Dale S. Wright, Professor of Religious Studies, Occidental College, Los Angeles, provides a thought-provoking read, especially for those of us concerned with problems of representing Buddhism, and Zen in particular, within Western culture today.

MODERN AND POST-MODERN PERSPECTIVES

The starting point of Wright's argument asserts that there is a profound difference between the worlds of post-modern and modern thought. This requires texts written by Western interpreters on Buddhism prior to the 'post-modern turn' to be themselves re-interpreted in the light of current thinking. Without such a process the meaning of Buddhism in the contemporary context remains unclear and inclined to irrelevance. Wright chooses the work of John Blofeld, in particular his translation of the 'Transmission of Mind' by the great ninth-century Chinese master Huang Po (*Huang Po Ch'u'an Hsin Fa Yao*), as an exemplary within modern scholarship and provides a contemporary reinterpretation not only of Blofeld but also of Huang Po himself.

John Blofeld was a bold, spiritual adventurer who, after leaving Cambridge, went out to China in the 1930s and immersed himself in Ch'an culture and practice. Although deep insight appears to have eluded him, he became richly familiar with the Ch'an outlook and its textual documentation. Later in life he studied Tibetan Buddhism and lived in Bangkok. His translations from the Chinese are outstanding and popular, while his auto-

biography makes fascinating reading. Blofeld, Wright tells us, was a romantic very much in the style of the thirties. His approach to Zen was undoubtedly influenced by its earlier representation in the West by D.T. Suzuki whose 'spin' on the subject fitted the inclinations of the time. This viewpoint implied that 'oriental' perspectives, the mysterious East, could offer immediate access to a spiritual understanding that underlay all religions. This universal basis of spirituality was seen as culture-free and fundamental, a 'perennial philosophy' as Aldous Huxley called it. With its emphasis on direct experience beyond words and scriptures, Zen was interpreted as a major route to this experiencing of the real, the various terms for which usually began with capitalised letters. Literature of this sort soon became challenged by 'scientific' historical analyses of texts in their socio-historical contexts which, as with Biblical criticism, adopted a sceptical, rationalist tone by-passing much of the inherent psychological insight of these writings. Such opposition still continues today when rational scholarship confronts the now often severely 'dumbed down' idealisms of New Age romantics.

Contemporary thought reveals that this romantic-scientific opposition was itself an expression of 'modernity', a schizoid view, which can now itself be examined in the context of the culture giving rise to it. This fresh, 'post-modern' perspective emphasises the contextuality of all philosophy. Whereas the 'romantic quest' was to 'behold spirit directly without mediation' through culture, so too did the scientific endeavour attempt to find an interpretation of history independent of context. The realisation that both perspectives share a common root in an avoidance of contextuality turns the focus on how that root actually shaped the ideas of the time. Wright argues that any reading of a text cannot be free of its contextualisation within an inevitably culture-bound world-view of the reader. This insight leads us to question the very acts of reading, understanding and meaning-making. Blofeld's interpretative bias itself needs deconstruction before we can again have a go at Huang Po himself. We then approach Huang Po in the knowledge that we too are doing this within the context of our own time, through our own coloured spectacles.

Wright shows convincingly that such an approach fulfils the requirement of Buddhism's own commitment to an understanding of the interrelatedness, the co-dependence or interdependence of all things and processes. The co-dependence of text, a reader's understanding and his culture are all matters that reveal the presence of this fundamental viewpoint. To start with, the text Blofeld translated so well hardly consists of Huang Po's own certified words. The text has gone through innumerable reworkings right from the start and each of these reflects the perspectives and prejudices of the time. To get back to Huang Po himself, as Blofeld thought he was doing, is a very uncertain process which, however, does not mean that fundamental perspectives in Buddhism's history are not present in the work attributed to him and highly relevant to us now.

HOW DO WE READ ZEN?

A major paradox in reading Zen is the constant admonition against reading itself, rough treatment of valued texts, even of the sūtras, and the suggestion that were one to meet the Buddha on the road the right thing to do would be to kill him. Yet these viewpoints are themselves presented in texts, in language, in often authoritative argument. We understand these remarks as criticism of a scholarly, book-worming, dry and lifeless, academic Buddhism that failed to read out of the books the spirit of life itself. The Master 'reads' his pupils, not merely the texts, he 'reads' circumstances of the times. 'When reading becomes a metaphor in this sense, it is synonymous with "interpretation" and beyond that, with "understanding" itself' (p.40). What, then, is an understanding of Zen?

When the rich textual products of one culture infiltrate another, it is inevitable that their 'understanding' is influenced by whatever comprehension of its subject-matter is already prevalent. On arriving in China, Buddhism was largely interpreted through the prior understandings of Taoism. The same process is operating in the arrival of Buddhism in the West today. When we read Zen stories in which, in answer to a perfectly reasonable question such as 'What is the meaning of Zen?', the master tweaks a nose or beats the unfortunate questioner with his staff, we tend to be bewildered or to infer some hidden sagacity in the master. We

may then apply to the story an explanation in conventional terms with which we feel at ease. The fact is we simply lack understanding of context, the behavioural code, which underlay such an interaction. Only through familiarity and reflection can we begin to perceive the verbal and non-verbal communication that is happening here.

Following Austin and Derrida, Wright remarks that 'utterances can only be understood with actual speech situations where shared assumptions enable interlocutors to make sense of each other' (p.48). And the same is true of situations for these are always expressions of on-going culture. Interpretation is always based on pre-understanding and on the working out or floating with the various possibilities that this implies for interpretation. The implication here, then, is that any word, concept or story is 'empty' of any precise culture-free meaning and is always relative to context. Once again, the Buddhist emphasis on the implications of interdependence emerges clearly.

The absence of 'original meanings' or 'objectivity' in these texts becomes clearer when we examine their frequent use of allegory. When Huang Po is asked a complex question relating to some folk story about previous lives, he replies by interpreting the story as representing the mind and its intentions or quest. In these texts we may see that the self who is interpreting or understanding them is 'not just the subject of the activity but also the object as well' (p.61). The 'Great Matter' of these texts is the self, the self who is doing the reading. When in reading Huang Po we eventually confront ourselves and our pre-understanding, we sense 'our immersion in the open space' of language (p.62).

While Blofeld often adds footnotes, today these only clarify Blofeld's own interpretative stance based on his own cultural preconceptions. Today we may be more aware of the simple relativity of our interpretations and such a view must then itself be subject to reflection. Essentially, this is what Wright means by the 'philosophical meditations' of his title. It is indeed a self-confrontation to realise there is no end to this!

THE LANGUAGE OF ZEN

Our discussion leads of course immediately to the question of Zen language. The importance of language in Zen is often

ridiculed in the texts, yet again this is a device pointing to the limitations of conventional uses of the formal or academic language of Buddhist description. There is a theme to be discovered here which is open to discourse in surprising ways because it has no solidified meaning — the relativity and flux of life itself are being pointed to and it is usually the tool of language that is used in such pointing.

Yet Zen rhetoric takes many forms. The language of Zen in Huang Po's time made use of ordinary speech intensified to a special purpose. The coded usage here had to be learned through the experience of being in a monastery, in having contact with the users, among whom the masters were pre-eminent. 'Words give rise to the experience and then issue from it immediately and spontaneously. "Awakening" has not occurred in the absence of language, but fully in its presence' (p.84).

The moment of awakening is a rhetorical occasion when the words of one speaker elicit a response in another. Wright classifies the varying forms of this rhetoric: the use of strange and puzzling expressions; direct pointing in which gesture rather than words is the means of transmission; the use of silence where words might have been expected; the employment of sudden disruptive, even seemingly aggressive, behaviour. All of these means are part of a 'language' with a clear intention — to effect transmission. For practitioners, language is therefore both the trap of *Samsāra* and the mechanism of release. Practitioners 'sought a transformed rhetoric of "live words" and "turning words" through which awakening might be evoked'. Some great masters, Huang Po and Lin chi, were so powerful in the use of these methods that almost all 'faltered' before them. The master cut through convention so drastically that interlocutors were often unable to find any response — and yet through being thrown out of conventional language they might suddenly perceive its emptiness.

Wright remarks:

'The Zen master is one who no longer seeks solid ground, who realises that all things and situations are supported, not by firm ground and solid self-nature, but rather by shifting and contingent relations. — He no longer needs to hold his ground in dialogue, and therefore does not falter when all grounds give way.'

— His role in dialogue is to reflect in a selfless way whatever is manifest or

can become manifest in the moment' (p.101).

Commonly, the spoken words merely reflect the actuality of the moment, words and actions are contingent on occasion, they fit or reflect the interconnections in play and neither attempts to impose upon it nor to explain nor describe it. They co-merge with it.

An important feature of a Zen story or *kōan* is thus the 'turning word' upon which the point of the event 'turns'. There are no fixed words of this kind. They arise in the moment and one of the tasks of a master is to realise and release them. These 'live words' act as direct pointers, but to what? They cause the interlocutor or the practitioner to focus so unnaturally on a phrase, a word or a story that it opens out of the conventional commonsense relations of the actual linguistic usage, thus breaking the hold that ordinary language has upon the mind. When this operates on self-understanding, the positioning of self-concern within its habitual understanding is broken and, falling both into and out of relativity, its own emptiness is seen in a radical reframing.

VIEWS OF HISTORY IN ZEN STUDY AND ZEN TEXTS

John Blofeld assumed that Huang Po spoke from a direct perception of truth that was pre-linguistic or extra-linguistic and that he would therefore not have an interest in history. In fact Chinese Zen, and indeed Huang Po himself, was always deeply concerned with matters of lineage and the accuracy with which transmission occurred. There is a vast literature that concerns itself with the historicity of transmission, much of which is myth or legend, but which has an important function in legitimating practice.

These lineage records are essentially family genealogies of transmission complete with anecdotes, exemplary stories, methods of practice and rituals. Contrasting lineages are like branches of a tree which draw their strength from the presence of the root. The ahistorical nature of experiential presence in Zen practice is thus always embedded in the narratives of the lineage. Enlightened identity is expressed in lineage identity and may include the occasional denial of the latter's importance for the sake of further transmission.

Contemporary historical study searches for the actual course of events and for documentation that may reveal the actual, 'true' history of Zen in China and Japan. From this perspective, lineage histories are simply bad history full of irrelevance, faulty timings, endless revisionism. The problem these lineages present for the practitioner in the present time are of a different nature. By idealising a certain approach, by a fixation of method and ritual, by an attempt at enlightenment as a resurrection of a particular moment in time, by a desire for unity and a specific identity in Zen, the capacity for a flexible relationship with the contingency of the moment — this moment — can be denied or made very difficult.

Yet, as Wright observes, a converse application of the Zen viewpoint to modern historical practices reveals the latter's stance as supposedly tradition-free and representing simple facticity yet lacking philosophical perspective and social responsibility. Such Western historians often fail in awareness of the extent to which historical study is reflexive to our time. This often comes about through a misuse of the natural science model in attempting to account for the origin and drift of human values.

'...both the Zen Buddhist and the modern, western historical tradition deny implicitly some dimension of the impermanence of history, the radical mutability of temporal movement' (p.117).

The encounter between traditional Zen historiography and Western methodology is already happening and, as each begins to inform the other, particular traditions of historical reflection with contrasting purposes 'may become... richer, more comprehensive and... applicable to cultural ends which are themselves open to similar transformation' (p.118).

EXPLORING FREEDOM AND CONSTRAINT

The Western idea of freedom dating back to the European 'Enlightenment' is closely tied to the significance of individualism in Western culture. There is always a dualism here, the individual is marked by his or her differentiation from others in society through the development of a unique identity relatively free from social coercion through self-possessed power and maturity. Liberation is conceived as the attainment of such distinction. This individualism plays a role in Western culture at a social

psychological level to an extreme that differs markedly from Asian values, with their greater concern with mutuality and social conformity¹.

In the West we have a dualism in our understanding of freedom that parallels the notion of a spiritual dimension independent from cultural constraint and definition. It was therefore easy for Westerners to interpret Zen enlightenment in terms of a liberation from social constraint into a transcendent spiritual dimension providing a sort of ego-free power. And indeed Zen texts are full of statements that may be read in this manner. With a naive but conscious guile or perhaps unconsciously, D.T. Suzuki promoted such a Euro-friendly vision and thereby laid an acceptable groundwork for the Western fascination with Zen in its romantic form. Like other Japanese teachers, his views expressed within Japanese culture may have been far more traditional and authoritarian. Beat Zen, Jack Kerouac, and many Western Zen romantics continued this illusory preoccupation which has, even so, undoubtedly eased Zen Buddhism into Western culture in much the same way that Taoistic interpretation assisted the entry of Buddhism into China.

A more considered examination of Huang Po and other Ch'an writers of the classical period reveals, however, a much more carefully nuanced idea of freedom. Statements that appear to promote individualism are carefully hedged about with requirements to obey the monastic rules, to conform to monastic ways of life, to imitate time-honoured practices, to obey the master and never to query the inheritance of the lineage as represented by him. The implication is that the practitioner submit himself to a powerful authority. And yet it is within this very submission that freedom may be found and the rules discounted. Freedom here is certainly not autonomy, nor is it the throwing off of constraint. Nor does this come to an end with the acknowledgement of enlightenment. When the enlightened master

Huang Po is asked why he still bows before the Buddha although he has reached non-attachment, Huang Po simply remarks that this is his custom. Lin chi having slapped his teacher, Huang Po, in the moment of realisation, then settles down to study under the master for many years.

Wright emphasises the point that freedom is always relative to some form of constraint. In the Zen texts, terms such as cutting off, severing, exhausting, breaking through, are related to obstructions, screening, holding, fixtures, limitations, fixed perspectives, enclosure or bondage. Yet the result is not an independence from the monastery or a separation of individual from custom. Rather, freedom is found within constraint. There is a triangulation in play here, independence and dependence are transcended in a third stance involving an emancipation from both through forms of inner renunciation. This comes about through an acceptance of limitation on individual will 'in order to make possible forms of freedom beyond those surrendered' (p.123). And yet with this very emancipation the monk continues in his personal dependence and independence.

Dependence on the master may be seen as a form of imitation through which a process with effects visible in the teachers emerges also in the practitioner. Imitation here is not copying, which is roundly condemned in Ch'an writings, but rather a following of a path revealed by another in order to make one's own discovery in the course of time. Again, the abandonment of the sūtras is not a rejection of them but rather a digestion of their meaning to an extent that they need no longer be consulted. It is the realisation of the essential 'emptiness' of phenomena that allows the 'burning' of the sūtras or the destruction of images and pagodas. The realisation that 'form is emptiness and emptiness precisely form' leads to the insight that monastic life and practice are empty of an objective value, are not anything of fixed merit and that, in the recognition of emptiness, there is no constraint in such a life either. Yet there is a path that has led to this insight, a path that seems at first sight the very antithesis of freedom. In the abandonment of self as independent, the interdependence of self with all things becomes clear. Within the insight of this renunciation any mode of being

¹ See further U. Neisser and D.A. Jopling (eds), *The Conceptual self in Context*, Cambridge 1997.

then becomes equal to any other.

Furthermore, the mode of realisation will not be of a fixed nature. Individuals will make their own discovery out of the uniqueness of their own experience, practice and karmic constraint. As time goes along and society itself changes so the mode of realisation shifts. In Ch'an texts we find old modes of enlightenment being updated so that ancient ancestors may be described as having realisations in the mode of the then present. Here again, the Zen historian has often tried to fixate too clearly the mode of transmission, ignoring Buddhism's own insistence on relativity. Enlightenment today will come about in its own way and the psychology of renunciation is likely to take many forms. Mere imitators of the texts beware!

In realisation, the pupil 'goes beyond' the master. Here we can see that, although the traditional path remains vital, without a new creativity embodying the specificity of the moment the tradition will itself die out through non-renewal. The story line of Zen thus never reaches a final statement, has no fixity, remains in the perennial space of an openness always partaking of and never independent from the now. Wright asks: how does the call to 'go beyond' also apply to us in the context of our reading Zen?

THE GREAT MATTER

The pivot of Huang Po's thought and indeed that of the whole Zen project is the understanding of Mind, yet it is at once clear that this word does not denote the simple mind that all of us have — the restless thinking consciousness. Mind, and here perhaps we might consider a capital M, is treated variously in Huang Po's writings as something that cannot be fixated either subjectively or objectively; as encompassing all things yet itself remaining unfindable; as like space or as a source, as a ground of phenomena. Mind is neither identical with the forms of knowing nor separable from them, yet 'In correspondence to conditions mind becomes things' (see p.158). The repeated use of 'as' shows the importance of effective metaphor here: metaphor pointing to a target that cannot be clearly seen as an object. Being the all and the everything in both the inner and outer of experience, it is necessarily also nothing in particular. The 'One-Mind' is at the same time 'No-Mind'. Wright barely discusses the sources of such ideas.

They derive from origins in the Tathāgatagarbha tradition of the Indian Yogācāra view, almost immediately, however, undermined by the application of the Prajñāpāramitā and Madhyamaka perspectives. Since, in the latter view, the six senses, their objects and the relations between them, all lack any inherent selfhood and have no controlling agency, they are all 'empty'. In the Zen texts there is thus an inevitable tension between expressions locating presence and absence in the appearances of the Mind. The insight into what the nature of this all-encompassing but unlocatable mind may be is both the focus of practice and the subject of much intellectual activity.

Wright explores the manner in which Huang Po's text and Blofeld handle this issue. Wright's philosophical struggle engages the texts in a very Zen style, refusing to allow any definition to harden into an idea which would exclude its inevitable contrary or which would bring about a premature closure in thought excluding further mobility. In accord with his post-modern dialectic, he repeatedly demonstrates that no term can be taken as standing on its own outside of language or culture and again, through this persistence, he cuts down the tendency to do exactly this. Similar tactics are inherent both in some ancient interpretations and in some parts of Blofeld's own account.

For example, while 'everyday mind is the Way', too much of an indulgence in everyday behaviour would lead to a passivity very far from the quest described elsewhere in the texts. Again, the attractive notion that Mind means the experience of the pure 'presence' of the here and now can imply something outside the usual experience of time and space in an eternity set up as against temporality. While the experience of the present moment lies at the heart of Zen, this cannot mean that everything else has somehow disappeared; other aspects of experience, such as the temporal nature of things, have simply been set in the background for a time. Similarly, a focus on certain terms and the experiential concomitants does not mean that other modes of experiencing are negated — they are simply not then in focus.

The whole tendency to represent the Mind as any sort of id-entity is replaced in Huang Po by expressions implicating some sort of id-unity: a unity of diversity such that nothing is experi-

enced in its separateness, but rather in a merging in which everything is present as nothing in particular. Wright again and again emphasises that words and experiences are co-present in understanding. Such understanding is largely 'pre-conscious' shaped by and contained in old memories, stories and past behaviour of oneself and others. There is a 'storehouse'² of such resources that gives meaning to any event and which can take linguistic expression. Conversely, the recall of words can reset an experience in modes that are as much non-verbal as verbal. This 'pretheoretical and prediscursive' experiencing, while drawing on understanding, also re-forms it beyond the merely intellectual. Such action facilitates living within time rather than an endeavour to escape it (p.174).

Indeed, if this relation between language, temporality and experience did not exist, it would be impossible for Huang Po to write of either experience or its presence now as an outcome of an event in the past — under the Bo tree perhaps. Paradoxically, his very words that point to 'direct awareness' are also understood by him as a doctrinal obstruction should the listener fixate upon them. And yet, without them no transmission would be possible.

Wright says:

A dialectical relationship between the practice of thought and Zen experience is essential to the tradition. Thought pushes experiences further, opens up new dimensions for it, and refines what comes to experience. Experience pushes thought further, opens up new dimensions of thinking, and sets limits to its excursions. The brilliance of Zen thinking is its tentative and provisional character, the 'non-abiding', 'non-grasping' mind. Knowing through thought that all thought is empty, Zen masters have explored worlds of reflection unavailable to other traditions — playfully 'thinking' what lies beneath common sense (p.179).

Whereas Blofeld felt the 'Mind' to infer some 'absolute' hidden beyond the veils of ignorance, Huang Po and other authors in his tradition continued to insist on its immediate presence only distanced from us due to a tendency to adopt some

idealising 'theory' closing ourselves off from the open freedom of staying with the flow of life. Yet to stay in such a space is scary, for the finitude of the self in its awareness of mortality then needs moment to moment acceptance.

Traditional training in such awareness has required practices which are the outcome of exceptional life choices; to leave home; to live together with others in the acceptance of monastic rule; in the awareness of lineage and time; in discovering the co-arising of monastic and ordinary life and a sense of empathic compassion for all beings; and hence the insight that all life itself is the ground of being.

The ground is encountered, not as a separate relation, but in the midst of all other relations. . . . practice is to cultivate the understanding and awareness that every relation to things in the world is simultaneously a relation to the ground of all things which has no 'existence' independent of the 'worldly things' through which it is manifest (p.189) . . . As the mind shifts in succession from one situation and object of awareness to another, the enlightened mind stays attuned to the "one-mind" at the root of all things' (p.190).

SUDDEN AND GRADUAL

Wright argues that to be enlightened is to be responsive to life situations in an 'open reciprocity' with them brought about by 'certain dimensions of self-negation'. In the history of Zen in China there were many disagreements concerning whether this understanding could be achieved by sudden or gradual methods. Underlying these arguments were disputes between contrasting lineages basically political in nature. Careful reflection on the wording of the texts shows that sudden and gradual actually co-exist in training. While a monk's everyday self-understanding is gradually called into question through hearing the teachings and living in a monastery in the proximity of a master, it was often by a sharp re-orientation of the manner whereby the individual conceived of himself against the background of his life that he came to an insight recognised by the master. Such momentary insight needed then to relate to an ongoing way of life and manner of experience before it could be said to be mature. Hence, after 'seeing the nature' many monks remained in training, often for years. Such a release into insight has the character of 'letting go' which may only come about after much resistance: to

² The *ālayavijñāna* of the Vijñānavāda perspective of the Yogācāra element in Ch'an.

let fall a secure conception of one's own identity is fearful and requires a trust that can only develop within time.

Wright once again emphasises the co-action within this process of meditative practices that are non-discursive with those that involve critical and creative reflection in thought. Practice is seen as not different from ordinary life, indeed the latter is to be experienced with the life of practice. To stress one or the other would be once again to fossilise an attitude in a closed perspective, the need for a 'going beyond' is again vital.

Emptied of previous selves, monks were initiated into processes of constructing identities by... reshaping the variety of patterns bequeathed to them through the tradition. 'Established convention' and 'distinctive identity' were not held to be in opposition since the established modes *were* distinct identities, and since one's own act of self construction would inevitably push in some new direction (p.214).

Indeed, the very creativity of the master would inspire a bright monk to innovation arising spontaneously within the life of practice.

The tension between the poles of tradition and innovation through 'going beyond' has sustained Zen through numerous historical crises and must be a key source for reflection at the present time. Yet a 'turning' moment remains essential for any individual on the path. The quest is necessarily always reflexive. Who is it that practices? Ever since the ministry of the great master Ma Tsu, this has always been the critical question and the response to it constitutes the turning moment. As Wright says, the contemporary versions of this questioning remain at the heart of the Great Matter.

CONCLUSION: ZEN CARTOGRAPHY

If we have understood Wright's philosophical reflections accurately we will be sensitive to the realisation that the end of this present reading is no end to understanding. Wright's text is itself relative to the deconstructive trend in post-modern thought, for which the many parallels in Zen have become more obvious than could be the case for Blofeld's generation. Are there, however, contemporary limitations to Wright's viewpoint? Apart from continuing the debate, it is hard to answer this question.

Wright's text is clearly a product of a post-modern philosophical mind, albeit one almost certainly having a background

familiar with practice. Zen is like a landscape and Wright has provided a philosophical map in terms expressing a contemporary philosophy highly influenced by Wittgenstein, Austin and Derrida. The same landscape can, however, also be drawn by different cartographers. In particular, while Wright does discuss mind and experience eloquently, this is not through the eyes of a skilled psychologist.

In the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* we find a psychological model basic to Zen practice and experience. Extrapolating from this model and relating it to modern psychology provides another equally fascinating map in which cross-references to Mead, Winnicott and the object-relations school of psychotherapy would be in the foreground³. Again, a more phenomenologically-based stance would take us onto maps scored with place-names derived from Husserl or Heidegger and placed in close relationship with ideas expressed by the great Japanese Sōtō master Dōgen⁴. Furthermore, the experimental psychology of meditation has much to inform us about the underlying mechanisms of attitude change and alterations in consciousness⁵. A contemporary scepticism may also lead us to examine Zen through Thomas Huxley's advocacy of agnosticism⁶.

In collecting these maps together, those practitioners of Zen who are not themselves cartographers may get confused. Where are the mountains on a map of county boundaries? What is the

3 See J.H. Crook, *The Evolution of Human Consciousness*, Oxford 1980; M. Skinner, 'Spontaneity and Self Control', in J.H. Crook and D. Fontana (ed.), *Space in Mind: East-West psychology and contemporary Buddhism*, Shaftesbury 1990.

4 A.C. Peranpje and R.K. Hanson, 'One dealing with the stream of consciousness: a comparison of Husserl and Yoga', in A.C. Peranpje, D.Y.F. Yo and R.W. Rieber (ed.), *Asian contributions to Psychology*, New York 1988; S. Heine, *Existential and Ontological Dimensions of Time in Heidegger and Dogen*, New York 1985.

5 S. Blackmore, 'Mental models and mystical experience', in Crook and Fontana, *op. cit.*

6 S. Batchelor, *Buddhism without Beliefs*, London 1997.

density of sparrows in a map of the vegetation of Wales? Maps do not answer all questions. They give us literally and deliberately a partial perspective. In the end, perhaps, we need to return to philosophising to gain an overview.

Wright teaches us not to allow closure on any perspective of Zen. There are always others in attendance. Zen in our time is Zen in our time — only just emerging from an Asian into a Western and increasingly global history. In China, Buddhism went into eclipse under a Neo-Confucianism that focused more on issues of social management and the economics of justice than it did on the dynamics of personal suffering. Indeed, the economics of the monasteries were often hardly of value to the man in the paddy field. Perhaps as these vital themes also emerge as paramount in the West, the relation between Buddhism and our unhappy concern with a degrading environment should loom large lest what some may see as excessive introspection or self-indulgence leads to a lessening of current interest in the Buddhist view. Then again, when the majority of Western practitioners are lay people and never likely to become monks, close attention to a creative manifestation of Lay Zen is vital. This is likely to require considerable questioning of ancient monastic practices in order to bring the essential clearly to the fore.

Staying on the open ground is in fact almost a necessity in the post-modern world of relativity, where one can pick a religion off a shelf in the local church, mosque or temple; where one can choose from any number of systems of closure in an inevitably prejudiced search for escape into unworldly perfection. Zen tell us to fly by the seat of our pants in the world as it comes to us, staying open to its beauty, perversity and continuous flux and finding the moment of global empathy in the loss of self-concern that yields compassion. If we are both personally and collectively to 'go beyond' the inherent suffering of human ignorance, it will be essential to remember that while 'setting the mind alive we do not put it anywhere'.⁷

⁷ Cf. the turning line from the Diamond Sūtra that led to Master Hui-neng's enlightenment.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Commentary on the Verses of the Theris (*Therīgāthā-atthakathā: Paramatthadīpanī*). William Pruitt. Pali Text Society, Oxford 1998. xiv, 445 pp. £22.00. ISBN 0 86013 363 X.

Mrs Rhys Davids' translation of the *Therīgāthā* (*Psalms of the Sisters*, PTS, London 1909) included the greater part of the stories found in Dhammadāla's commentary on the *Therīgāthā* (*Therīgāthā-atthakathā*), but did not include translations of the *Apadāna* passages quoted in that text or of the grammatical portions of the commentary. The volume under review contains a complete translation, and is based on Dr Pruitt's recently published edition of the text. The quotations from the verses of the *Therīgāthā* which form the lemmata are taken, for the most part, from the present reviewer's revised translation of that text in *Poems of the Early Buddhist Nuns* (PTS, Oxford 1989, pp.165-228), thus linking the two translations.

Translating the grammatical portions of any Pāli commentary presents difficulties, because commentaries often explain one grammatical form by another, or translate a compound by breaking it down into its component parts. In both cases the English translation is the same, and in the past translators have had to have recourse to such insertions as 'alternative grammatical form' and 'resolution of compound' to make the position clear. Similarly, there are problems in explaining which part of the translation corresponds to the word(s) being commented upon and which to the explanation. Sometimes the lemma can be put into bold type or italics or into quotation marks: "X" means Y, or X means Y, or X means Y. Sometimes, however, there is no direct explanation, but individual words in the exegesis can be related back to the text being commented upon.

To get around such problems Dr Pruitt has devised an idiosyncratic way — described on p.x of the Introduction — of employing roman and italic scripts to make it clear what words (or sometimes merely endings) are taken over from the original verse(s). The result is rather bizarre at first reading, but those

who are not interested in the relationship with the original texts can quickly learn to ignore these features, while serious students who are interested in tracing the relationship between text and commentary will find them very helpful.

The footnotes to each page discuss a variety of problems presented by variant readings and grammatical forms, and give references to and quotations from parallel versions in other texts. There is a helpful General Index (pp.387-44) and Indexes of Texts Cited and Quotations from other Pāli texts (pp.444-5).

K. R. Norman

Journal of the Pali Text Society, Volumes XXII-XXIV. Ed. O. von Hinüber ad R.F. Gombrich. Pali Text Society, Oxford 1996, 1997, 1998. £17.25 each. ISBN 086013 333 8; 0 86013 356 7; 0 86913 364 8.

Volumes XIX-XXI (1993, 1994, 1995) of the *Journal of the Pali Text Society* were noted in an earlier number of the Journal (BSR 14, 1, 1997, pp.70-2). Since then three more volumes of the JPTS have appeared.

In Volume XXII Margaret Cone provides the text of the I.B. Horner lecture for 1995, entitled 'Lexicography, Pali, and Pali lexicography' (pp.1-34), in which she gives an account of the history of Pāli lexicography and says something about the methods she is employing to produce a new edition of the PTS's *Pali-English Dictionary (NPED)*. In an article entitled 'Chips from Buddhist workshops: Scribes and Manuscripts from Northern Thailand' (pp.35-57) Oskar von Hinüber writes about the information which can be gleaned from the colophons of manuscripts, with special reference to the collection of Pāli manuscripts kept at Vat Lai Hin near Lampong in Northern Thailand.

In 'A Pāli canonical passage of importance for the history of Indian medicine' (pp.59-72) Jinadasa Liyanaratne points out that the passage on 'wrong livelihood' found in the Brahmajāla and Sāmaññaphala Suttas of the Dīghanikāya contains some twenty words which refer to medical practices dealt with in Āyurvedic texts, and the data found in those texts help to elucidate and clarify the meanings of the Pāli words.

In 'Studies in Vinaya technical terms I-III' (pp.73-150) Édith Nolot discusses in considerable detail the Pāli technical terms

Samgha-kamma 'procedure', *Adhikarana* 'legal question, formal dispute, case', and *mānatta, parivāsa*, and *abbhāna-kamma*, giving numerous Sanskrit and Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit parallels where they seem helpful. The article has a valuable bibliography and complete indexes of the words discussed.

In 'The Sambuddhe verses and later Theravādin Buddhology' (pp.151-83) Peter Skilling discusses a short Pāli verse text entitled Sambuddhe or Sambuddhe-gāthā, known in Thai and Burmese recensions, and looks at the development of the theory of past and future Buddhas according to the Theravādin and other Buddhist schools.

The volume also contains a List of Members of the Pali Text Society (pp.185-221).

In Volume XXIII Thomas Oberlies gives examples in his paper 'Pāli, Pāṇini and "Popular" Sanskrit' (pp.1-26) to support his suggestion that the interlinking of the linguistic study of Pāli, Epic and Purānic Sanskrit, and Pāṇini will give help towards a better understanding of the development of the Indo-Aryan languages, and a better comprehension of the texts.

Hitherto, of the sub-commentaries upon the texts of the Khuddakanikāya, only that upon the Jātakaṭhavaṇṇanā was known to exist. In 'The Paramatthajotikādīpanī, a fragment of the sub-commentary to the Paramatthajotikā II on the Suttanipāta' (pp.27-41) Oskar von Hinüber reports the discovery in the Vat Lai Hin collection of a fragment of a sub-commentary upon the Suttanipāta and gives a transcript of the manuscript, identifying the lemmata. This is a very important find, in as much as it confirms that sub-commentaries upon other texts of the Khuddakanikāya did exist.

In 'Buddhist Literature of Lān Nā on the history of Lān Nā's Buddhism' (pp.43-81) Hans Penth gives an extensive survey of the Buddhist literature in the widest sense, including inscriptions and colophons to manuscripts, of Lān Nā which shed light upon the history of Buddhism in that city.

Peter Skilling has two articles in this volume. In the first, entitled 'On the school-affiliation of the "Patna Dhammapada"' (pp.83-122), he considers the suggestions which have been made about the school-affiliation of the Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit

Dhammapada text, of which the most recent edition appeared in 1989 (Margaret Cone, 'Patna Dhammapada, Part I: Text', *JPTS* XIII, pp.101-217), and concludes that it belonged to the Sāmmatiya school, thus agreeing with the suggestion, unknown to him when he began to write his article, which was made by Kōgen Mizuno in 1984 (in *Buddhist Studies in honour of Hammalava Saddhātissa*, p.168). In his second article, 'New Pāli inscriptions from South-east Asia' (pp.123-57), Skilling gives information about Pāli inscriptions found in recent years at Nakhon Pathom and Chai Nat in Thailand and at Śrīksetra in Burma.

Primoz Pecenko has recently published the first two volumes of the sub-commentary to the Ānguttaranikāya (Ānguttaranikāyatikā, Vol.I, 1996; Vol.II, 1997, PTS), which is attributed to Sāriputta, and in 'Sāriputta and his works' (pp.159-79) he considers the various works of which Sāriputta is mentioned as author in the bibliographical texts and the colophons of the works of his disciples.

The volume concludes with an index to *JPTS* Volumes IX-XXII (pp.181-7).

In Volume XXIV Jacqueline Filliozat continues with the task of making known the contents of Pāli holdings in libraries, and gives a survey of the Pāli manuscript collection in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (pp.1-80).

There are no less than four articles by Peter Skilling in the volume. In 'A note on King Milinda in the *Abhidharmaśabdhāśya*' (pp.81-101), he considers the various references to the Greek king Milinda/Menander in Pāli, Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan, and suggests that the Milinda corpus was more varied and extensive than previously thought. In 'A note on Dhammapada 60 and the length of a *yojana*' (pp.149-70) he considers various versions of the pāda 'Long is a *yojana* for one who is weary', and then gives a range of definitions of the term found in Pāli, Sanskrit and Tibetan. Since the original meaning of *yojana* was probably 'the distance travelled by a yoke of oxen in one day', it is not surprising if the precise length of a *yojana* varied with time, place, tradition and context.

In 'Sources for the study of the Maṅgala- and Mora-suttas' (pp.185-93), Skilling gives information from Sanskrit and Tibetan

texts to supplement his article 'Theravāda literature in Tibetan translation' in *JPTS* XIX, pp.69-201. Buddhists early on recognised that the virtues of the Buddha could not possibly be limited to the nine listed in the Dhajagga Sutta of the Samyuttanikāya but must be unlimited. This concept later took on a mystical flavour, and in 'Praises of the Buddha beyond praise' (pp.195-200) Skilling considers two Pāli verses in the early nineteenth-century Thai Traibhūmilokavinicchayakathā which state that an aeon would not be long enough to enumerate in full the Buddha's virtues. Since one of these verses is found in the *atthakathā* to the Majjhimanikāya it is clear that the idea was well-known as early as the fifth century.

Leslie Grey provides a supplement (pp.104-47) to his *Concordance of Buddhist Birth Stories* (1st ed., 1990; 2nd [much enlarged] ed., 1994, PTS), and William Pruitt provides information (pp.171-83) about additions to the collection of Burmese manuscripts in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., supplementing the list which he gave in *JPTS* XIII, pp.1-31.

All three volumes have a List of Contributors and Notices about Research Fellowships offered by the Society and the submission of contributions to *JPTS*.

K.R. Norman

Der Pravāraṇā in dem kanonischen Vinaya-Texten der Mūlasarvāstivādin und der Sarvāstivādin. Jin-il Chung. (Sanskrit-Wörterbuch der buddhistischen Texte aus den Turfan-Funden 7), Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1998. 368 pp. ISBN 3-525-26156-X.

Dr Jin-il Chung presents a critical edition of the Sanskrit Pravāraṇāvastu of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, taking into account the Chinese and Tibetan translations. Furthermore, some newly identified Sanskrit fragments of the *Pravāraṇāvastu of the Sarvāstivādins have been added. This text concerns the 'invitation' or *pravāraṇā*, a ceremony held by the Buddhist community at the end of the rains retreat. On this occasion, every monk invites his fellow monks to point out his wrongs, if any, whether seen, heard or suspected.

The Sanskrit (Mūlasarvāstivādin) text newly edited by Jin-il

Chung — an earlier edition dates from 1939-59 by Nalinaksha Dutt — belongs to a collection of manuscripts discovered in the region of Gilgit during 1931-38. Some pages are missing, one is fragmentary. As far as possible, these lacunae have been filled on the basis of two fragments found in Turfan and with the help of two other texts also found at Gilgit (the Poṣadhabhāstu and a Karmavācanā collection). Apart from the Sanskrit text, the author also includes the Tibetan and Chinese translations. For the Tibetan text, three block prints and two manuscripts have been used. The Chinese text is based on the *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* and Korean editions. The author gives two translations into German: one of the very similar Sanskrit and Tibetan texts, and one of the somewhat deviating Chinese version. Extensive indexes of Sanskrit technical terms have been added. We regret, however, that the indexes do not give a clear connection between the Sanskrit terms and their Tibetan and Chinese equivalents; this would have facilitated the consultation of this most interesting work and given it an encyclopaedic surplus value.

The above-mentioned comprehensive material is the basis of a thorough analysis of the *pravāraṇā* ceremony presented in a comprehensive introduction. The author has studied in detail all the fundamental technical terms, taking into account all the relevant primary Indian, Tibetan and Chinese sources. With this approach, the author has succeeded in providing clear and accurate definitions of essential technical terms enabling a most precise examination of the *pravāraṇā* ceremony.

As mentioned above, the author gives extensive references to the Tibetan and Chinese terminology concerning the *pravāraṇā* ceremony. This study is highly valuable for any further reading of Tibetan and Chinese texts, for which the correct understanding of technical terms is of fundamental importance. Therefore, we regret that the work does not contain indexes enabling the reader to relate a Tibetan or Chinese term easily with the corresponding Sanskrit terminology. On this item, just one remark:

On pp.78-9, Jin-il Chung explains the seven methods to settle a dispute in the Samgha. To this, he adds detailed references to all Vinayas and, for the sixth method ('Ermittlung des tatsächlichen Sachverhaltes'), the author also refers to the Chinese Vinayas

including the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya: DH T 1428[22] 915b2-c10. In n.220, the author adds that the Chinese terms used by the Dharmaguptakas is 罪罪相. Indeed, the term 罪罪相 (according to our view, possibly 'investigation into the nature of the offence') renders the idea of the sixth method. It is, however, not the term used by the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya on p.915b2-c10. In the latter passage, the Vinaya has the more problematic term 罪處所 ('the position of an offence?', 'that which is related to the fact of an offence?'), not mentioned by the author. The term 罪罪相 is, however, used elsewhere in the same Vinaya (p.713c 26-27).

It is only very exceptionally that a similar observation can be made. Overall, the author investigates in a very accurate way the essence of the technical terms. This terminological study is of great value to all future research.

Starting from this solid basis, the author then outlines the *pravāraṇā* ceremony. He makes extensive use of all relevant data in the texts of the different Buddhist schools. It is most interesting how this approach enables the author to correct problematic passages in the text of the Mūlasarvāstivādin school (pp.97-123). It further clarifies some difficult issues, such as the interpretation of a 'gana-pravāraṇā' ('group-pravāraṇā') (pp.56-71). In this way, the work enables readers to gain a thorough understanding of all aspects of the *pravāraṇā*. In addition, the *pravāraṇā* ceremony is also incorporated into the framework of the monastic life. Thereby, the relation with the *poṣadha* ceremony is investigated in detail (pp.40-52). Finally, the author divides the proceedings of the *pravāraṇā* ceremony into fourteen parts. In a most innovative and refreshing way, these parts are then incorporated in the editions of the Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese versions.

In conclusion, the above work is a most valuable philological contribution to Vinaya studies and promises to become a major reference work for all researchers in Indian, Tibetan and Chinese monastic discipline.

Ann Heirman

The Literature of the Personalists (Pudgalavādins) of early Buddhism. Bhikshu Thích Thiện Châu (English translation by Sara Boin-Webb). Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute, Hồ Chí Minh City 1996. xii, 241 pp. Repr. Motilal Banarsi Dass, Delhi 1999. xiv, 242 pp. Rs 295. ISBN 81-208-1622-6.

The Vātsīputriya school arose two centuries after Lord Buddha's Parinirvāna (ca.420 BCE), as a dissident branch of the Sthaviras or Theravādins; and in the following centuries it gave rise to other schools, those of the Dharmottariyas, Bhadrayāniyas, Sāmmitiyas and Saññagārikas. Of all the schools the most important is that of the Sāmmitiyas. All these schools received the common designation of 'pudgalavādins', i.e. 'those who affirm the *pudgala* (= individual)', or 'personalists', owing to the fact that they maintained the existence of a person or individual conceived as an entity which transmigrates and accounts for all the basic facts of personality, memory, responsibility, etc. The *pudgala* assumes the functions of an *ātman* or soul without being an *ātman*, since it is not a substance, does not exist *in se et per se*, but depends for its existence on the *skandhas*. The *pudgala* is neither identical to nor different from the *skandhas*. The notion of *pudgala* came dangerously close to the notion of *ātman*. This is the reason why the Pudgalavādins were accused of being heretics and considered unable to attain Nirvāna.

To this interesting and audacious Buddhist school is dedicated the book by Thích Thiện Châu, who received his Ph.D from the Sorbonne, under the guidance of André Bareau, with the French version of the present work. He was the author of a good number of publications on Buddhism.

Chapter One of the book gives a historical survey of Early Buddhism and detailed information on the Personalist schools. It is a useful introduction to the central theme of the book. Chapter Two is dedicated to the study of the literature of the Pudgalavādins and indirectly to their doctrines. Section A gives interesting information about the Pudgalavādin Tripitaka, of which four treatises have been preserved: T(aishō) 1506, which systematises the basic doctrines of the Pudgalavādins in general and of the Vātsīputriyas in particular; T 1505, which is another version of the foregoing; T 1649, which explains the Sāmmitiya

theses of the *pudgala* and the *antarābhava*, and T 1461, which is a short Vinaya treatise of the Sāmmitīyas. There are several Buddhist texts references to the Pudgalavādins and their doctrines, and quotations from their works. Section B contains a detailed study and a very useful resumé of the above-mentioned treatises. Chapter Three, Section A, briefly presents 'The Original Teaching of the Buddha' and Section B expounds 'The Theses of the Pudgalavādins', dividing them into two categories: 'The Main Thesis: the *Pudgala*' and 'Secondary Theses'. Section C lists the different categories of Śrāvakas as established in these schools. The book has a good bibliography.

Thích Thiện Châu's book is a very valuable contribution to the knowledge of an important school of Buddhist thought. It offers rich and useful information about the Pudgalavādins, and its exposition is clear, rigorous and systematic.

Fernando Tola and Carmen Dragonetti

dBu ma śar gsum gyi ston thun. Phya pa Chos kyi sen ge. Edited by Helmut Tauscher. (Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde 43) Vienna 1999. XXXIII, 146 pp.

Phya pa Chos kyi sen ge (1109-69) is the name of a Tibetan scholar famous for his work in the field of the Pramāṇa and Madhyamaka traditions. He is supposed to have composed commentaries on Indian classics such as the Bodhi[sattval]-caryāvatāra, Satyadvayavibhāga, Madhyamakālamkāra, Madhyamakāloka, etc. These and other works, however, are mere names to us, being no longer available. Tradition has it that our author followed the Svātantrika tradition, writing 'many refutations of the works of ācārya Candrakīrti'.

Here, for the first time, is presented the text of his *dBu ma'i śar gyi ston thun*. In the colophon the title is given as *dBu ma de kho na ūid kyi sñin po*, which in Sanskrit would have been *Madhyamakatattvahṛdaya. (This title reminds us also of the Madhyamakahṛdaya of Bhavya.) It is a type of summary of the three works by Jñānagarbha, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśila mentioned above (viz. Satyadvayavibhāga, etc.).

Only one manuscript seems to be available and is, as Tauscher reports, written in *dbu med* and displays an archaic

orthography and a style of writing that points to the twelfth century. The editor has divided his text into numerous sub-divisions. The main issues taken up by Phya pa Chos kyi sen ge are: *satyadvayavibhāga*, *satyadvayalakṣaṇa*, the commitment to Mahāyāna practice, *prajñā* based on *paramārtha-satya*, and the final achievement of the *buddhabhūmi* (*sambhāradvaya*, *kāyatraya*). All this sounds most familiar to scholars acquainted with the Indian sources used by Tibetan scholastics.

Tauscher promises the reader a translation to follow as a separate volume in due course. Compared to earlier Madhyamaka texts there are hardly any new ideas in the Tibetan presentation of *Madhyamakatattvahṛdaya. It will, however, be of some interest if Tauscher identifies all the Indian sources and analyses how Phya pa Chos kyi sen ge has exploited them in his own way. What has the learned abbot of gSaṅ phu sNe'u thog included? What has he left out? And why?

Chr. Lindtner

Emptiness Appraised. A Critical Study of Nāgārjuna's Philosophy.
David F. Burton. Curzon Press, Richmond 1999. XV, 233 pp.
£40.00. ISBN 0 7007 1066 3.

This book presents itself as an investigation into the philosophy of emptiness as expressed by Nāgārjuna. The concern of the author is not merely to ascertain but also to appraise (assess) the meaning(s) of Nāgārjuna's philosophy of emptiness.

David Burton sees Nāgārjuna as a serious thinker who addresses fundamental philosophical questions. His position was, according to Burton, that all dependent originating entities are conceptual constructs. In this, he was probably influenced by 'the Prajñāpāramitā tradition'.

A sceptical interpretation of Nāgārjuna is rejected by referring to Nāgārjuna's claim that it is possible to know (*jñāna*) that all entities lack *svabhāva*. (One could, however, maintain that Nāgārjuna was most sceptical about 'clinging' to dogmas (*drṣṭi*) of any kind.) When Nāgārjuna claims that reality (*tattva*) is in some sense beyond concepts and words, Burton points out that the notion of two realities — one final and unconceptualisable, the other provisional and conceptualisable — is surely problematic

(p.53). Unable to make sense of such an unconceptualisable reality or of the non-conceptual knowledge of it, Burton argues that Nāgārjuna's philosophy, understood as an assertion of universal absence of *svabhāva*, is tantamount to nihilism (p.83). Nāgārjuna is thereby, according to Burton, condemned, contrary to his intentions, to nihilism (p.116).

In the second part of his study, Burton considers Nāgārjuna's critiques in the Vaidalya and Vigrahavyāvartanī of the Nyāya theory of *pramāṇa* (understood as a form of philosophical realism). He finds that Nāgārjuna's arguments fail to establish that there are no mind-independent entities and that there can be no knowledge of mind-independent entities (p.210). The conclusion, then, of Burton's study is that Nāgārjuna fails to provide a convincing answer to the question 'how are things actually?', even though critical engagement with his thought does seem to lead one to a deeper questioning (p.211).

The question for us is whether it is fair to appraise (assess) the meaning(s) of Nāgārjuna's philosophy of emptiness from a somewhat narrow 'rationalistic' perspective of scepticism or nihilism, as proposed by Burton.

To be fair to Nāgārjuna we must, in my opinion, try to understand him from his own presuppositions. We should be extremely careful to impose our own preconceived notions and interpretations on ancient philosophers. This does not at all mean that we should abandon rationality, but rather be open to the possibility of extending its natural limits.

Nāgārjuna concludes his *Yuktisāṭikā* (60) with a wish: 'May all people by this merit (*kuśala*) gather a collection of merit and insight (*punya-jñāna-sambhāra*) and obtain the two goods (*sat*) which arise from merit and insight!'

Here he refers to his ultimate ideal, viz. the attainment of a physical and spiritual body of a Buddha, being the result of *punya*- and *jñāna-sambhāra* respectively. For him, therefore, knowledge (*jñāna*) of *tattva* is not tantamount to 'nihilism', but rather a dynamic and creative reality that brings about a *dharma-kāya* of bliss and beauty. Knowing and being cannot for him be separated. For us today this may seem an odd idea, but there is no reason to assume that Nāgārjuna did not believe this

to be so. (An entire chapter of the *Ratnāvalī* is devoted to the topic of *bodhisambhāra*, as is also the Bodhisambhāraka of Nāgārjuna.) So, for Nāgārjuna, knowledge was not merely knowledge of something, it was also being and becoming.

To conclude this brief review, the interesting question is not so much whether Nāgārjuna uses *jñāna* in a sense acceptable to us, but rather *how* he uses it in a way that makes good sense in his own historical context (partly obscure to us, perhaps). I agree with David Burton that first we must ascertain and then assess. However, one's ascertainment must not be made on too narrow grounds. We should, as a good rule, be more concerned about making new discoveries than about making new interpretations.

Chr. Lindtner

Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition: The Nihon ryōiki of the Monk Kyōkai. Trans. and ed. Kyoko Motomachi Nakamura. Curzon Press, Richmond 1997. xii, 322 pp. £40.00. ISBN 0 7007 0449 3.

It has been nearly twenty-seven years since the volume under review first appeared in print, and we are fortunate that, rather than going the way of many other quality scholarly works, a new edition of Nakamura's classic English language translation has now appeared.

The *Nihonkoku genpō zen'aku ryōiki* ('Miraculous Stories of Retribution of Good and Evil in Japan') is the oldest extant collection of *setsuwa bungaku*, which has been variously translated as 'tale literature', 'narrative literature', or, as the *Ryōiki* is defined by Nakamura, 'legendary literature'. It was compiled sometime between 786 and 823 (Nakamura argues convincingly for compilation in the Kōnin era, 810-24) by the monk Kyōkai (or Keikai), and contains one hundred and sixteen accounts in three volumes of miraculous occurrences and karmic retribution in ancient Japan.

Kyōkai's express intention in compiling the tales of cause and effect in the *Ryōiki* is to persuade people to 'put aside evil, live in righteousness, and without causing evil, practice good'. Along with the overtly didactic message that goodness yields good and evil yields evil, the collection contains accounts of such semi-legendary

figures as Shōtoku Taishi, En no Gyōja (E no Ubasoku) and Gyōgi Bosatsu; stories of divine intervention of Bodhisattvas, travels in the underworld, immediate rewards of faith and punishment of sacrilege abound, and are as much of interest to the modern reader as they surely were to those towards whom Kyōkai's work was originally aimed.

Chapter One of the translator's introduction provides a broad and well-researched account of state and popular Buddhism prior to and during Kyōkai's lifetime. It includes an intriguing discussion of *mappō* ('decline of the Dharma') thought and its roots in Kyōkai's time, spurred by the 'Unknown Passage' of the preface of the third book in the Kamakura-period (1185-1333) Maeda manuscript of the *Ryōiki*. Nakamura argues that, while *mappō* thought did not become a social force until the late Heian period (794-1185), it was known to monks such as Kyōkai much earlier. While aware of the degenerate times in which he lived, Kyōkai maintained an optimistic world-view, and Nakamura concludes, 'tentatively', that the suspect passage is indeed the work of the original compiler.

The second half of Chapter One discusses the influence on Kyōkai's work of earlier Chinese Buddhist works and Japanese 'legendary literature' such as the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki* and *Shoku nihongi*. It is also here where it becomes evident that Nakamura is loath to define the *Ryōiki* as *setsuwa*, nor yet to distinguish *setsuwa* from 'legendary literature'. However, as Chapter Two of the introduction demonstrates, Nakamura's approach is primarily from an anthropological perspective, evaluating the *Ryōiki* as a reflection of the world-view of popular Buddhism in Kyōkai's time. This the translator does with utmost skill and vigilance.

This edition, while much appreciated, is not a revised edition of Nakamura's work, but rather a reprint of the original published by Harvard University Press. Other than an incomplete page of errata conveniently slipped in between the acknowledgements and the table of contents, it is the same book of twenty-seven years ago. This should give the reader pause because, while Nakamura's book is still the standard English translation, scholarship in the area of *setsuwa bungaku* and the *Nihon Ryōiki* has moved apace. Although the boom in English-

language studies of *setsuwa* has subsided somewhat since the first publication of *Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition*, there have been several fine studies and/or translations of *setsuwa* collections, and Japanese scholarship recently has been truly vigorous. This should be kept in mind while the reader, at the same time, benefits from the work's many merits. For example, while Nakamura relies on Kasuga and Endō's 1967 edition of the *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* series for pronunciation of names due to 'difficulties in determining the actual pronunciation used in the age of the Nihon Ryōiki', recent scholarship is at times at odds with these renderings. One such example is 'Dhyāna Master Eigō' (pp.223, 225), which more recent scholarship tends to render as 'Yōgō'. Similarly, 'Saka Gigaku' (p.125) should read 'Shaku Gikaku'. Also, as mentioned above, while the new edition does contain a page of errata, it is only a partial one. Several small technical errors remain unchecked, such as the rendering of the term *yokukai* (*kāma-dhātu*) as 'yakukai' (p.161, n.7), the word 'women' when it should be 'men' (p. 71, line 18), and an entirely missing footnote (p.196, should be n.1).

Structurally, the work is user-friendly, with each story from each of the three [Japanese-text] volumes clearly numbered and titled. Nakamura's meticulous notations are of great service, for the most part, and cross-references to later *setsuwa* collections and histories (together, Nakamura's 'legendary literature') where the same or similar stories appear are much appreciated. Unlike a past reviewer who has denounced as wasteful Nakamura's extensive use of Chinese characters in the text or notes for proper names, sūtras and terms being introduced for the first time, this reviewer, on the whole, appreciates both the effort and the convenience of this convention. There are, however, a number of instances of repetition of the same characters even when the author has rendered it in English before (e.g. *jido*, *Nehan gyō*, many place names), or in other cases, when the author has translated the term slightly differently with seemingly little justification (e.g. *chishiki*). In these cases, particularly those involving footnotes, one would be right to label them as 'distracting'. These flaws, however, strike me as simply the result of poor editing in an otherwise painstaking effort, which might

have been (but unfortunately were not) corrected before the printing of the new edition. *Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition* provides five useful appendices as well, including a convenient list of 'major works of Japanese legendary literature' (not limited to *setsuwa* in a narrow sense).

The translator, overall, does a fine job rendering a sometimes difficult text into English. Like a past reviewer, however, I was surprised that the fact the *Ryōiki* was written in Chinese was never raised in the introduction. While at times, I would like to have seen the translator being more faithful to the original Chinese text in grammar and syntax (e.g. the preface to Volume One has Kyōkai 'see the world closely', where a more appropriate rendering would have him 'looking carefully upon the people of the world'), it is easy to see why the clear, usually easy to follow narrative has stood the test of time. The fact that English is presumably not the translator's first language is grounds for high praise, but does occasionally interrupt the flow of otherwise smooth-running narrative. Some such instances are the result of nuances between two similar English words, or too literal a translation: 'gaining a penalty' (*mukui wo uku*, p.143), 'served the Kannon' (p.231), where 'made offerings to Kannon' might have been more appropriate, and the translation of *mushi* as 'insect' when the subject is actually a crab (p.178). Such glitches sometimes left this reader momentarily perplexed.

In the end, *Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition* is both a joy to read as an example of early Buddhist *setsuwa* literature and an informative, useful study of Nara period Japan. It is our great fortune that the new edition provides the opportunity for any student of Japanese literature or Buddhism to add Kyoko Motomochi Nakamura's classic work to his or her library.

Michael J. Dankert

Zen Masters: A Maverick, a Master of Masters, and a Wandering Poet. John Stevens. Kodansha International, Tokyo 1999. 161 pp. £8.99. ISBN 4-7700-2385-5.

This is a republication of a work originally entitled *Three Zen Masters*, which first appeared from the same publisher in 1993. It

would appear to be substantially unaltered, leaving the occasional minor error uncorrected: if Ryōkan really did have a 'T'ang edition of the writings of Chuang-tzu' (p.110), then he was certainly 'no ordinary monk' since they were not printed until the Sung: here 'T'ang' means simply 'Chinese'. But John Stevens is a seasoned writer on Zen, and such rare lapses only serve to underline the generally excellent level of his work on Ikkyū, Hakuin and Ryōkan. The book is rich in anecdotes concerning the masters, not all of which the author vouches for as accurate, but all of which serve to provide an excellent image of their perceived spiritual importance in Japan, and Stevens is especially to be commended for the generous inclusion of enough poetry, painting and calligraphy from its subjects to give an idea of their cultural importance as well. Of course, this is only an introductory work, but there are three pages of suggestions for further readings in Japanese and English to point the way forward. If you missed this volume the first time, try to look out for it now.

T. H. Barrett

Buddhism Without Beliefs. Stephen Batchelor. Bloomsbury, London 1998. 127 pp. £9.99. ISBN 0 7475 3769 0.

This book has created controversy in its rejection of the belief in rebirth, and it is undoubtedly true that if you give up this belief you lose much of the force of the Buddha's teaching. For Gotama the cause of *dukkha* is not just *tañhā* but *tañhā ponobhavika* — the craving associated with rebirth — and the cure is the destruction of this craving so that there is no rebirth. Nonetheless, the controversy is surprising; the Dhamma has had to change simply because not many Westerners believe, or are likely to believe in rebirth, and it has changed.

But in a helpful direction? Despite the book's title, Batchelor outlines the 'convictions' (p.20) behind his modern version of the Dhamma, and the one moral value he espouses is that of 'awakening' — 'Awakening is the purpose that enfolds all purposes. Whatever we do is meaningful to the extent that it leads to awakening, meaningless to the extent that it leads away from it' (p.42). But awakening to what? At different times Batchelor refers to an awakening to a detached awareness of

transience, to the fact of death, to the force of *mettā*, traditional Buddhist concepts, but at other times to an awareness of beauty, natural or artistic, and he insists that awareness of beauty is intrinsic to awareness of transience in the process of meditation, even that the meditator is comparable to an artist. This is questionable. Doesn't a meditator aim to achieve a state involving neither beauty nor ugliness, nor even 'delight' (Majjhima Nikāya, tr., Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses*, Boston 1995, p.87ff.), but detached acceptance of 'things as they really are' (Anguttara Nikāya, tr. F.L. Woodward, *Gradual Sayings* (PTS), V, p.2)?

This confusion about awakening leads to uncertainty as to how it should be achieved. If the awakening is to beauty, then the practice might well be concentrated on looking at beautiful things, visiting art galleries, etc. (which might be called a life of craving). If awakening is to the detached acceptance of transience, a different mode of life would be required, involving the control of feelings, and Batchelor does in fact encourage the control of craving. He says we should not indulge in 'utopian thirst' (p.73), not desire the world to be perfect — not beautiful?

The confusion is not solved by insistence on the need for self-fulfilment:

... I aspire to awaken. I appreciate its value, and I am convinced it is possible. This is a focused act that encompasses the whole person. Aspiration is as much a bodily longing as an intellectual desire, appreciation as much a passion as a preference, conviction as much an intuition as a rational conclusion. Irrespective of the purpose to which we are committed, when feelings are involved, life is infused with meaning (p.41).

If this suggests anything about how we should live, it is that we follow our desires. The assumption is that the 'I' is knowable as a 'whole person' even before awakening, a very different idea from the one Batchelor expresses elsewhere that the 'I' consists of 'ephemeral and contingent' traits and that the self is 'unfindable' (p.79). We are encouraged to act towards whatever this 'whole person' aspires to. 'Aspiration' is a 'bodily longing' (does this refer to sexual desire or the need for food?), 'appreciation' is a 'passion' (craving?), 'conviction' is 'intuition' (non-awareness?). These

feelings are encouraged, not disciplined, because through them life becomes 'infused with meaning' (we lose awareness?). What this amounts to is: 'If you feel like it, go for it'. 'Irrespective of the purpose to which we are committed' suggests a life-style where 'everything goes'.

This is the new Dhamma, fragmented between incompatible convictions, and it is not surprising that it has little to say about specific actions in terms of morality. If the aim is the stopping of craving, actions need to be morally restrained; if it is an expression of the 'whole person', actions need to be as unrestricted as possible without the hurting of others. Batchelor does not expressly state that moral discipline is not part of the new path but, despite his dislike of craving, the admiration which he expresses for self-fulfilment is enough to make us assume that 'this is what he means when he refers to 'views that confine... experience' (p.96).

And yet *Buddhism Without Beliefs* gives the impression that this new Dhamma is a natural development from Gotama's Dhamma. In doing so it misrepresents what the Buddha taught, as represented in the Pāli Canon, Batchelor's stated source. It does so in at least five ways:

1. At the beginning of the chapter on 'Friendship' is a quotation assigned to the Buddha: 'Just as the dawn is the forerunner of the arising of the sun, so true friendship is the forerunner of the noble eightfold path'. Batchelor says this quotation is from an anonymous translation of a passage from Samyutta Nikāya V, and the impression created is that the Buddha emphasises the importance of friendship within the path.

The quotation seems to be a mistranslation. In the PTS translation the sentence runs 'Just as... so friendship with the lovely... ; (*Kindred Sayings* V, p.27). The sutta iterates this idea of friendship 'with the lovely': it is not about human friendship. In another sutta (*Kindred Sayings* I, p.114) the Buddha expressly states that it is not human friendship which is important but 'friendship with whatsoever is lovely and righteous'. In 'The Greater Discourse on Voidness' (*Middle Length Discourses*, p.971) he sees pleasure in social contact between bhikkhus as an impediment; repeatedly he stresses the value of solitariness.

Friendship is not integral to his path.

2. On pp.18-19 Batchelor refers to 'consolatory elements that have crept in: for example assurances of a better afterlife if you perform various deeds'. This element has not 'crept in': it is there in the Buddha's teaching. There is no need to cite a single example in the face of the assumption, iterated throughout the suttas, that good deeds lead to a happy rebirth. Express statements to this effect are prominent in the sections of the Anguttara Nikāya directed towards followers.

3. Batchelor says (p.5) the Buddha 'did not claim to have an experience that granted him privileged, esoteric knowledge of how the universe ticks'. This is true as regards questions of the origin and duration of all life, but in other ways Gotama does claim esoteric knowledge, knowledge of the minds of individual people, of his own former rebirths and of others' rebirths. His esoteric knowledge allows him to develop 'supernormal powers' (See *Dīgha Nikāya*, tr. M. Walshe, *The Long Discourses*, Boston 1986, p.105).

More important for us is his claim to have found the truth of suffering and the way to the elimination of suffering. He calls himself 'World-knower' (*Gradual Sayings* [tr. C.A.F Rhys Davids] I, p.163). — 'Whatsoever in the world... all that do I know' (*ibid.* [tr. Woodward] II, p.27).

And he does relate this esoteric knowledge to one experience — 'Such was the insight... that arose in me about things not heard before' (Nānamoli, *The Life of the Buddha*, BPS 1972, p.43).

4. When Batchelor calls the Noble Truths 'challenges to act with creativity and aesthetic awareness' (p.105), he does not make it clear that they were not so for the Buddha. In the Sutta Piṭaka Gotama shows little interest in beauty other than to stress the importance of not being entranced by anything experienced through the senses, including the 'sense' of the mind. He associates beauty with the arising of lust and deprecates it (*Gradual Sayings* I, p.2, and *The Illustrator of Ultimate Meaning*, PTS, p.79ff).

5. Batchelor says that the Buddha 'prescribed the cultivation of a path of life embracing all aspects of human experience' (p.7). The Buddha's cure for craving — embrace life! Perhaps Batchelor

meant to imply only that the path as applicable to every sphere of experience. If so, it must be said that the Buddha did not make it clear how the path was to be applied, for instance, as regards art or the organisation of society outside the Sangha. But, intentionally or not, the words give the impression that the Buddha endorses a 'live life to the full' philosophy, something akin to Batchelor's 'individuation' (p.53). Nothing could be further from the truth. The Buddha's emphasis is on abnegation and control of the senses. Almost any sutta in the Majjhima and Digha could be chosen to show how the path represents an invitation to live in strict moral control and rigorous practice.

Buddhism Without Beliefs is caught between two sets of beliefs, but it does not need this manhandling of the suttas. I think this misrepresentation is important. It is my impression that most lay Buddhists do not read what the Buddha taught; they find the suttas boringly repetitive. Reading Batchelor's book, they gain a false impression of the teaching. The popularity of books like the one under review makes it likely that awareness of this teaching will in the West become increasingly limited to the monastic order. The Buddha invited us to investigate his Dhamma, not to accept blindly; the danger is that so little will his teaching be heard that investigation will be impossible for most people.

Colin Edwards

El budismo. Peter Harvey. (Spanish version of *An introduction to Buddhism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1990.) Cambridge University Press, Madrid 1998. 468 pp. Ptas 2,995. ISBN 84-8323-014-3.

This is one of the best introductions to Buddhism available at the present time and undoubtedly the best in existence in Spanish. Its publication in this language replaces and supersedes E. Conze's *El budismo: su esencia y desarrollo* (F.C.F., Mexico 1978, transl. of *Buddhism, its Essence and Development*, Oxford 1951), which is by now, although still useful, rather outdated.

The work comprises thirteen chapters: 1. The Buddha and his Indian Context; 2. Early Buddhist Teachings: Rebirth and Karma; 3. Early Buddhist Teachings: The Four Holy Truths; 4. Early

Developments in Buddhism; 5. Mahāyāna Philosophy; 6. Mahāyāna Holy Beings; 7. The Later History and Spread of Buddhism; 8. Buddhist Practice: Devotion; 9. Buddhist Practice: Ethics; 10. Buddhist Practice: the Sangha; 11. Buddhist Practice: Meditation and the Development of Wisdom; 12. The Modern History of Buddhism in Asia; 13. Buddhism Beyond Asia. In the Spanish version, this last chapter includes a substantial section by Russell Webb on 'Buddhism in Spain and Latin America' with brief bibliographies of works published in Spanish and Portuguese. The book closes with an 'Appendix on Canons of Scriptures' and an excellent bibliography classified by subjects.

This is a book that offers a very complete image of Buddhism and does justice both to the original sources and to the latest research by Buddhist scholars. The author deals not only with the history and philosophy of Buddhism, but also with an aspect which, although no less important, tends to be ignored in a good many studies of religions, namely its practice.

The considerable importance of Harvey's book lies precisely in the fact that he describes Buddhism as a living religion, and not as a fossilised relic no longer practised by anyone, which may be approached merely through the study of ancient texts.

It takes the reader definitively beyond the old academic controversy, in the West, as to whether Buddhism is a philosophy or a religion. It is, in fact, both things at one and the same time, and no contradiction is involved. Buddhist philosophies are many but they are all integrated in relevant religious practices. Buddhism is certainly a matter for thought, but it is also a matter for living practice and meditation. There is no theory without praxis and no praxis without theory. Nor is Buddhism either a rationalist philosophy or a religion depending on blind faith. There is philosophy, but there is also ritual and devotion, action and contemplation, wisdom and love, knowledge and compassion.

Harvey presents the history of Buddhism without taking sides in favour of any of the traditions or their texts, unlike Conze's inclination towards some Mahāyāna schools and the literature on the Perfection of Wisdom. In this book, the history of Buddhism is explained up to the present day, with due attention to the most recent historical developments, in particular those accompanying

the progressive spread of Buddhism in Europe and America.

The philosophies of the various schools of Buddhism are elucidated with precision, clarity and simplicity, without assuming any prior knowledge on the reader's part, developments being explained step by step on the basis of the oldest teachings common to all Buddhist traditions. Abundant textual references make it possible for the reader to follow up and verify the correctness of the author's interpretations.

The only point open to debate and which, in our view, is not sufficiently supported by the texts is Harvey's interpretation of Nibbāna during life as a 'temporary stopping' (p.87) of all conditioned states, and the identification of Nibbāna as 'a radically transformed state of consciousness (*viññāna*)' (p.88). However, the author's scholarly integrity leads him frankly to admit that 'the analysis of *Nibbāna* as objectless consciousness, though, is the author's own interpretation' (p.89).

In short, Harvey's *El budismo* is an excellent work of scrupulous scholarship. It will be a good textbook for future students of Buddhism and a help to all those interested in the subject in gaining a reliable up-to-date view of Buddhism with a sound historical and critical basis. It is to be hoped that the example thus set will be followed by others and that, in addition to meditation manuals or devout books on Buddhism, further recent works of serious scholarship on the Buddhist religion will continue to be published.

Abraham Vélez de Cea

Buddhist Inscriptions of Andhradesa. B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, N.S. Ramachandra Murthy, B. Subrahmanyam, E. Sivanagi Reddy. Ananda Buddha Vihara Trust, Secunderabad 1998. xi, 278 pp. Rs 500.

As recent archaeological discoveries have shown, Buddhism in Andhra Pradesh enjoyed the patronage of local kings and chieftains even before the *dhamma-vijaya* of Aśoka. Thus, numerous Buddhist settlements — mainly concentrated in the coastal Andhra and Telangana regions — from the fourth-third century BCE to the fifth-sixth century CE have been unearthed.

To this day about 500 Buddhist inscriptions are reported

from Andhra Pradesh. The majority of these have already been deciphered and published in various journals. In this volume all important inscriptions from 46 out of the 140 listed Buddhist sites are presented in a convenient form. The intention is to provide a survey of the history of Andhradesa relating to Buddhism from the third century BCE to the fourteenth century CE. The original inscriptions are engraved on stone, copper plates, crystal, pots and conches, etc. Eighteen inscriptions from eleven sites are published here for the first time.

Supported by literary and archaeological evidence the inscriptions show that Buddhism flourished for over 2000 years. Great names such as Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Dignāga, Bhavya, Buddhaghosa, etc., were responsible for the growth of Buddhism inside and outside the area. Unfortunately (with the possible exception of one or two references to Āryadeva), no inscription relates explicitly to any of these celebrated teachers.

Of particular significance are the sixteen rock edicts (two of them 'minor') of Aśoka that have been found at Erragudi (some 10 km north-west of Gooty). It is here, in Rock Edict XIII, that we have the famous mention of 'the Yavana king named Antiyoka (and)... four other kings named Tulamāya, Antikeni, Makā and Alikasudara...' (p.35).

Next in importance are the inscriptions from Nāgārjunakonda, in Palnad taluk of Guntur district, situated on the right bank of the river Krishna, about 20 km from Macherla. They were first published by J.Ph. Vogel in *Epigraphia Indica*, vols xx and xxi.

Nāgārjunakonda was, as is known, discovered in 1926, and generally considered the greatest archaeological discovery in this century. Systematic explorations were made between 1927 and 1931 by A.H. Longhurst. Further excavations were made by T.N. Ramachandra from 1938 to 1940 and, on a larger scale, between 1954 and 1960 by R. Subramanyam. The site is not only associated with the name of Nāgārjuna but also considered a (if not *the*) major cradle of the Mahāyāna movement of Buddhism.

Some of the inscriptions found show that Aśoka's missionary activities were carried on by later generations. Explicitly mentioned are the monks (*theriya*) who, 'for the welfare and

happiness of all sentient beings' brought the Buddhist gospel (*pasādaka*) to 'Kasmira, Gandhāra, China, Chilāta, Tosali, Avaramta, Vamga, Vanavāsi, Yavana, Damila, Palura and the island of Tambapamni' (p.153, or those monks who converted the people of 'Kasmira, Gandhāra, Yavana, Vanavāsa, Tambapamnidipa' (p.175).

Clearly, the area was, at certain periods, an international centre of Buddhist studies, as it were. Numerous Roman coins have also been found. Influence from Roman art is also manifest.

References to Buddhist doctrine are seldom very illuminating. The Buddha is hailed as a *hetuvādin*, as being honoured by Indra and as omniscient; the four Aryan truths are mentioned (p.112). Normally, people would pray to the Bhagavat for good health, longevity, victory and happiness for the entire world. In a few cases also for their own Nirvāna. The Buddha is often looked upon as a supreme god granting the desires of the pious devotees. Many names of schools, texts and individuals are mentioned. Many are the gifts of Dharma.

The book is based on a manuscript by the late Dr B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao entitled *Brahmi Inscriptions of Andhraadesa*. It was published by the Ananda Buddha Vihara Trust on the occasion of the Buddha Jayanti celebrations in May 1988. The Trust, under the presidency of Ven. K. Sangharakshita Mahāthera, is committed to the revival of Buddhism in Andhra Pradesh. It has already published eleven books. These include translations into Telugu of classics such as the *Dhammapada* (1996), *Suhrilekha* (1997) and *Bodhi(sattva)caryāvatāra* (1998). The Trust's most ambitious project is the development of a Buddhist Cultural Centre to be located on three acres of slopes of the Mahendra Hills, Secunderabad, about 5 km north of the Hussain Sagar Lake. The purpose is to provide many and various facilities, not just for the local Buddhist community but also for visiting monks and scholars.

The Buddhist heritage of Andhra Pradesh is, without any doubt, very rich and remarkable. It seems to me that the Trust would do well in emphasising the importance of reviving the *dharma-vijaya* initiated by Aśoka and continued by the Buddhist missionaries mentioned in the inscriptions at Nāgārjunakonda, 'for

the welfare and happiness of all living beings' (or at least for some!).

Chr. Lindtner

Buddhisten in Indien heute. Beschreibungen, Bilder und Dokumente. Detlef Kantowsky. (Universität Konstanz, Forschungsprojekt 'Buddhistischer Modernismus', Forschungsberichte 16), Konstanz 1999. 216 pp. ISBN 30930959-3-5.

The title represents the latest offering in this excellent series concerned with Buddhism in the modern world, turning its attention this time to India, the country where Buddhism was born but has hardly survived, yet struggles to make its mark again. In his Preface the author shows that he is aware of the complexity of the situation in which many factors come into play and overlap with and sometimes overshadow the specific theme of contemporary Indian Buddhism. Among them are issues connected with the problems of the 'untouchables', both converted and unconverted to Buddhism, the movement of the so-called Dalits, the Tibetan communities living in Indian exile, the Nepalese immigrants in eastern India, the presence of foreign monastic institutions in Bodh Gaya and the latest Buddhist revival in the south, especially in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, which is quite different from the neo-Buddhist movements in the wake of Ambedkar's activities, because the Dravidian south can draw, for its anti-Brahman protest, on its own rich Buddhist past. Issues which the author bypasses include the role of neo-Buddhism in protest movements against social discrimination, the relation between the Buddhist 'orthodoxy' and the neo-Buddhist 'heterodoxy', and the chances of the emerging lay Buddhism which is in a way a novelty in Buddhist history. All of these issues represent themes which would merit separate treatment, but the author wishes to concentrate on a few examples of the new Buddhist everyday realities and practices as they fare in the specific Indian cultural context of today.

He starts with a survey of literature concerned with Buddhism and neo-Buddhism in present-day India, with extracts and bibliography. From it one gathers not only that there were in 1951 hardly 190,000 Buddhists in India and that their number grew

to some 6,500,000 in 1991, mostly by the conversion of 'untouchables', but also interesting facts about the aftermath, such as the continuing discrimination by Hindus against the converts as former 'untouchables', and also about the discrimination of converted Buddhists, who found new jobs and thus escaped their former lot of having to perform despised tasks, against 'unclean' Hindu castes still caught in that trap. While the secular aspects of the converts' lives improved, there is still a long way to go in order to integrate the spiritual values of Buddhism into their outlook.

The rest of the book is characterised by its subtitle. Under the modest heading 'Descriptions' six topics are ventilated. First we learn the basics about the founding and activities of the Maha Bodhi Society and then comes the story of Bodh Gaya as 'the central place of Buddhism' where the revivalist movement started in 1891 with two main aims: to make the 'place of Enlightenment' the focal point for Buddhists worldwide and to place the Maha Bodhi Temple under Buddhist management. The first aim has certainly been achieved (there are twenty-seven Buddhist temples, monasteries and institutions there against the five or six I found in 1976), but the other one has not: there are still only four Buddhists nominated by the Bihar state government onto the Temple's management committee of nine; the rest, including the chairman, must be Hindus [Ed. Last year, however, the Indian bhikkhu Prajnaseela was appointed chairman]. The third 'description' refers to another 'central place', this time of neo-Buddhism, namely Nagpur, where on 14 October 1956 the historic ceremony of the conversion of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar to Buddhism took place, together with several hundred thousands of assembled 'untouchables'. There is now a bust of Dr Ambedkar on that spot, and a memorial stūpa. Moreover, Nagpur now has the Dr Ambedkar Memorial College and some forty Buddhist vihāras. Socially and politically, however, it is still a backward and depressed place. Ambedkar was Minister of Law in the first Nehru government and, as is well known, the father of the constitution of Free India for which he posthumously received the highest decoration, the Order of Bharat Ratna ('the Jewel of India') in 1990. Most Indian neo-Buddhists worship him as a

Bodhisattva.

It is a somewhat sad story that very few monks from traditional Theravāda countries or Indian monks trained in them took up the challenge of educating the vast numbers of converts in their newly adopted faith and of looking after their spiritual needs. Thus it happened that communities of neo-Buddhists became the target of the activities of Sangharakshita's organisation, 'The Friends of the Western Buddhist Order'. The author finds it interesting, in his next essay, how the 'engaged Lay Buddhism' of the 'Friends' found response among Ambedkar's deserted flock and helped to bring about a great improvement in the situation of these lay neo-Buddhists, both materially and spiritually, and how it is guiding them towards self-help, although self-sufficiency is still far away.

The next topic discussed is the 'All India Bhikkhu Sangha'. It was Ambedkar himself who made it clear in 1956 that it was important for the revival of Buddhism in India that monks would not work for it over books in monasteries, but would 'move from door to door', but because of the scarcity of Buddhist monks in India 'common good people should also propagate the religion and perform its rites'. This task was then taken up by Sangharakshita, who had met Ambedkar several times, and it is continued by his disciples. A further requirement by Ambedkar was opening 'a sort of logical seminar' for training both lay and ordained neo-Buddhists who thus 'could be taught the fundamentals of Buddhism and made to learn the different languages of India so that they could be sent to the different parts'. This was partly realised on a small scale and with the assistance of the Maha Bodhi Society in Sarnath and, on a slightly larger scale, in the Thai monastery at Bodh Gaya where the All India Bhikkhu Sangha (AIBS) was also born in 1970. But it is still an uphill struggle. According to estimates, there were in India about 75 monks in 1970, in 1998 the number of those registered with the AIBS rose to a mere 574. Their training and behaviour, as well as their status in the eyes of Indian society, still leave a lot to be desired. As for their status, however, one cannot really expect it to change. Buddhist monks in India will always be looked upon as any other *sādhu* or *svāmi*. That, after all, was the case in the

Buddha's time. The privileged status of later times which monks still enjoy in Theravāda countries has been the result of royal (state) patronage, which will never come back to India. No wonder that assistance from abroad is still needed at this stage to keep the AIBS organisation going.

The last theme of the 'Descriptions' is the 'Vipassana International Academy' on the 'Dhammadgiri' hill near Igatpuri, about 84 miles north-east of Bombay. Founded in 1976 by S.N. Goenka, a successful Burmese businessman turned meditation master, it now enlists every year thousands of participants in regular meditation training courses lasting ten days. The Academy can accommodate 500 students at any one time. There are several other Vipassana Centres in India and in many other countries, East and West, as the knowledge of this method of Buddhist meditation has been widely disseminated and also publicised in many books in the past few decades. The author asks whether and how Indian neo-Buddhism benefits from the activities of the Academy, which is especially popular with foreign Buddhists coming from overseas and also with many Hindus, particularly from Bombay. While the neo-Buddhists he approached regard it with suspicion, because they see it as frequented by rich upper class Hindus, some other Indian Buddhists have welcomed it and so has the Maha Bodhi Society. The 'All India Bhikkhu Sangha', on the other hand, did not even send a message on the occasion of the inauguration of the Academy's new pagoda, a kind of replica of Shwedagon, in 1997. When the author asked the opinion of a member of Sangharakshita's order, the answer was merely: 'We know that it is there'. One can detect in it a somewhat sectarian attitude. What sensitive Indian neo-Buddhists mind in relation to mixing with Hindus in religious practice is their and the Hindu establishment's 'inclusivism' towards Buddhist ideas and symbols, well illustrated by S. Radhakrishnan's words: 'The Buddha did not feel that he was announcing a new religion. He was born, grew up, and died a Hindu. He was restating with a new emphasis the ancient ideals of the Indo-Aryan civilisation'. Indian neo-Buddhists have not yet overcome their anti-Hindu resentment to tolerate such patronising. The author, however, evaluates the Academy's activity positively and includes in the

'Documents' section Goenka's account of his spiritual journey and the code of discipline applied in the Academy's courses.

Other documents of that section also supplement the 'Descriptions' with facsimiles of letters and various other items, announcements and agendas of important meetings, etc., and there are several photographs in this extremely useful book, which finishes with copious notes and a bibliography.

Karel Werner

Buddhismus und Christentum Geschichte, Konfrontation, Dialog. Michael von Brück and Whalen Lai. Verlag C.H.Beck, Munich 1997. 805 pp. DM 78.

There are (and always have been) many kinds of Buddhism and many kinds of Christianity, many kinds of Buddhists (individuals and organisations, etc.), many kinds of Christians. Is a meeting, a dialogue or understanding between Buddhism and Christianity possible at all? Is it desirable? Is it necessary? Will it be fruitful or superfluous? Can there be peace between nations if there is no peace among religions? Can there be peace without dialogue? Can there be dialogue between religions without scientific research? Is understanding the cause of faith, or faith the cause of understanding? Can and shall there be competition by means of arguments? Will there always be conflict between faith and reason? Where shall we seek refuge — in Gautama (the) Buddha, or in Jesus (the) Christ? Or in Jahve? In the Church (or in one of its sects), or in the Sangha (or in one of them)? In the Dharma or in God? — Questions, questions, questions... Hardly any simple or final answers.

This book is highly noteworthy to the extent that it is the first comprehensive historical account of the meeting between Buddhism and Christianity.

The first part relates some significant events in the history of the meeting between the two religions in India, Sri Lanka, China, Japan, Germany and the United States (pp.43-286).

The second part focuses on the basic problems in the dialogue: 1) Jesus Christ versus Gautama the Buddha, 2) God versus Dharma, and 3) Church versus Sangha (pp.289-578).

The third part deals with the historical background and the

hermeneutical perspective (pp.579-672). Notes, a bibliography and indexes conclude the book (pp.679-805).

On the whole it provides a good starting point for a serious debate between Buddhists and Christians. Arguments and opinions already launched by representatives of the two religions provide the best basis of further dialogue. There are always many aspects to be taken into consideration, be they personal, philosophical, religious, political or psychological (for instance, German and Japanese participants in the debate seem to feel that they have to tackle the question of their so-called 'war guilt'). And at every stage the languages involved pose enormous barriers. How many of the vociferous debaters know Sanskrit or Greek, or both? Can one seriously enter such an important debate without a sound knowledge of the primary sources in the original classical Eastern and Western languages? Is translation possible without distortion? In my opinion the answer is clearly No!

While it cannot be denied that some of the early participants in the dialogue had enjoyed a good and classical European education, this is rarely the case today. Above all — why deny it? — the recent decline in American scholarship is disturbing. At the same time American theologians (whatever the word now means) are often the most active in the dialogue. However, in my experience, they have little or no knowledge of German or French, little and often distorted knowledge of European history and — naturally — absolutely no knowledge of Greek and Latin. They may know some, or even a lot of Chinese, Japanese or Tibetan, but when it comes to the original Sanskrit — *kā kathā*?

Under these circumstances the dialogues tend to become tedious — not to say hilarious. The book under review affords many examples of both. Somehow the dialogue should be conducted 'from above', rather than 'from below'. It may be interesting to hear what 'religious leaders' have to say. The present Dalai Lama (Tenzin Gyatso) is quoted for several perceptive and rational points of view. From the present Pope there is hardly a positive word. Some of his curious misunderstandings, or distortions, of Buddhism are pointed out in the Polish collection of essays: *Przekroczyć próg madrości* (ed. by Jacek Sieradzan, Krakow 1997). (As I understand, it has not been easy for the

editor to find a publisher for a book critical of the views of the Polish pope as expressed in his 1994 book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*.)

May I, when it comes to this dialogue, suggest a somewhat different perspective? In 1993 the RC bishop in Denmark, Hans L. Martensen, wrote (in 'Berlingske Tidende', 19 Nov): 'If the Danes were to exchange the faith of the Danish (Lutheran) church with faith in Judaism, Islam or Catholicism, this would be a small and insignificant change compared to the situation where they exchanged their Christian faith with (ancient Indian) ideas about reincarnation and pantheism. Fundamental issues are at stake. It has to do with a final yes or no to Christianity in general'.

In 'Berlingske Tidende', 18 January 1997, I published a reply to Hans Martensen: 'The Three Religions of Abraham'. As opposed to the three sons of Abraham, the sons of the Buddha can never accept the dogma of God as the sole creator of the world. Nor can they accept that God can interfere with the true and natural causality of the world in which we live. The fundamental Buddhist belief in natural causality determined by the universal law of karma thus precludes any serious dialogue with those who believe in creation *ex nihilo*, and in the whimsical interference of a personal or ethnocentric God with his own creation. This is but blasphemy. Moreover, putting faith above wisdom, as Abraham's sons usually do, is simply to insult human reason. In brief, with their repudiation of natural causality, the sons of Abraham insult not only God, but also humanity.

I am, naturally, aware that not all Christians and Buddhists will agree with me about taking this approach to the dialogue. It may not be a particular reconcilable attitude. On the other hand, I have little doubt that had it the power to do so, the 'Supreme Holy Congregation of the Holy Office', formerly responsible for publishing the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, would hardly hesitate in indexing many a Buddhist book, just as the 1945 *Index* still cited many of the works of enlightened writers and philosophers such as Hume, Henry More, Voltaire, Locke, Gibbon, Diderot, etc. etc. In my view, we need a *debate*.

There are, however, other issues also. Some Buddhists may want to see the Christ as a sort of avatar of the Buddha. Some

Christians may rather want to see the Buddha as an avatar of the Christ.

The parallels between Buddhism and Christianity are many and manifold. Absolutely spurious are modern parallels between e.g. Nāgārjuna on the one side, and Wittgenstein, Derrida on the other.

Just as Christianity may be seen in the broader perspective of being just one representative of Abrahamic religion, thus Buddhism, at least in India, may be seen as a specific form of Brahmanism. On this I have written in *Asian Philosophy* 9/1 (1999), pp.5-37. In my opinion, the comparison will be most fruitful when undertaken in the perspective of *Brahmanism versus Abrahamic*, so to speak.

Concerning the dialogue between Abrahamic and Brahmanism — or Buddhism and Christianity in the broader context of India and Europe — it would have been interesting to have a discussion of the contributions of Paul Deussen, Karl Gjellerup and Houston Stewart Chamberlain. But not even their names are mentioned.

Much more could also have been said about the perhaps most important aspect of the dialogue, namely the likelihood of Buddhist influence on the formation of the New Testament. This, too, still seems to be somewhat a taboo. Valuable recent work has been done by N. Klatt, *Literarkritische Beiträge zum Problem christlich-buddhistischer Parallelen* (Cologne 1982), and Z.P. Thundy, *Buddha and Christ. Nativity Stories and Indian Traditions* (Leiden 1993). Much more remains to be done.

If I am correct about the Gospels of the New Testament being largely an 'inverted translation' of the Buddhist Gospel, then clearly the ground for a very serious dialogue indeed between Buddhism and Christianity has been established. In a speech delivered in Sarnath on 6 November 1998, I characterised the NT Gospels as 'Judaised Buddhism'. For some of the arguments in support of this new thesis, see my booklet *Buddhism in Relation to Science and World Religions* (published by Ananda Buddha Vihara, Secunderbad, Andhra Pradesh 1999) I concluded this paper with these words: 'The time has now come for a careful revision of the New Testament Gospels in the light of its original Buddhist

sources. Buddhist scholars and Buddhist monks must now take up the comparative study of the Sanskrit and Greek sources. Jews and Christians may do likewise. They will detect Buddhist influence not only in the Gospels but also in many other early Christian writings'.

Chr. Lindtner

Jaina Philosophy and Religion. (English translation of *Jaina Darśana* by Muni Shri Nyāyavijayaji). Translated by Nagin J. Shah. Motilal Banarsi das, Delhi 1998. xxv, 469 pp. Rs 450.

In spite of the fact that the philosophy and religion of Jainism have very much in common with Buddhism, it would seem that students and scholars of the latter seldom know very much about the *darśana* of Mahāvīra and his followers. As a rule, the ancient Buddhist sources treat the Jainas with disdain, and modern scholars — with a few exceptions — appear to have inherited some of that attitude. This is a great pity, for the study of ancient Jaina sources has much to offer that can also be of interest from the comparative Buddhist point of view.

Being, like the Bauddhas, śrāmaṇas, the Jainas would deny the authority of the Vedas, the doctrine of God as *creator mundi*, the notion of sacrifice and rituals leading to liberation, and, finally, the privileges of the Brahmins. Very often they would use the same arguments as the Bauddhas when refuting the claims of the Brahmin priesthood. Their path was also a path from suffering to liberation; and it consisted of right faith, right knowledge and right conduct. Certainly, compared with the Bauddhas, they had different ideas about the soul, about ontology and about details of the path to liberation. However, there is no reason for us to ridicule the early scholars who believed Jainism and Buddhism to be but two different branches of the same tree.

This book is a translation of the original Gujarātī work *Jaina Darśana* that has already run into twelve editions. It was written by the Jaina monk Muni Nyāyavijayaji (1890-1970), the author of about thirty works in Sanskrit, some of which were translated into English by the author himself. The pandits of Ujjain honoured him for his unusual erudition, his non-sectarian spirit and his poetic genius.

The topics treated include: the concept of the soul and its classifications; space, matter, time, karma, liberation, God; right knowledge, right conduct, the vows, bondage and liberation, non-violence, austerity, donation. The final chapter contains an excellent exposition of Jaina logic. There are also indexes of authors, titles, words, and subjects.

On the whole there is, to the best of my knowledge, no scholarly work on Jainism that treats these matters with such deep erudition, good sense and lucidity of style as this splendid and beautifully produced book about a *darśana* that deserves much greater scholarly and general attention than it normally receives.

Muni Shri Nyāyavijayaji's great work is published by the B.L. Institute of Indology in Delhi. The translator, Nagin J. Shah, is known for the important books *Akalanika's criticism of Dharmakirti's Philosophy* and *A Study of Javanta Bhatta's Nyāya-mañjari*.

One can only admire the great achievements of these fine pandits.

Chr. Lindner

Companion Encyclopedia of Asian Philosophy. Ed. Brian Carr and Indira Mahalingam. Routledge, London 1997. xxiii, 1136 pp. £95.00. ISBN 0-415-03535-X.

The main divisions of this worthy tome of over a thousand pages are Persian, Indian, Buddhist, Chinese, Japanese and Islamic. Students of Buddhism are particularly well served by this book because of the part played by Buddhism in Indian, Chinese and Japanese culture. Each of these main areas is further subdivided into chapters on: origins, knowledge and reality, language and logic, morals and society and contemporary philosophy. In addition there are several chapters on some seminal thinkers within the main traditions. These are: Śaṅkara, the Buddha, Nāgārjuna, Confucius, Mao Zedong, Al-Farabi and Avicenna. The Persian and Japanese sections are not represented by any personalities. I knew relatively little about the Persian tradition but perhaps Dōgen might have merited a separate chapter, although he does get about five pages. Finally, there are brief

introductions to each tradition by the editors, a comprehensive index, glossaries of philosophical terms and bibliographies.

This work is truly collaboration between East and West. Of the forty plus contributors many are Asian scholars. There is no attempt at uniformity of style, each contributor being allowed to present their work in a way that is most natural to them. Many are eminent indeed; for example, we have Ninian Smart, Donald Lopez and Masao Abe all writing on Buddhist philosophy.

I found the Persian section (the shortest) very hard going, hardly surprising considering my aforementioned ignorance. This book is only rewarding to those who are serious students of these traditions; it is not for those who have little academic knowledge. Zoroastrianism is manifestly dualistic, nevertheless there are attempts to interpret it otherwise. John Hinnell's chapter on contemporary Zoroastrian philosophy shows how the Parsis in India were influenced by nineteenth century Protestant missionaries who tended to concentrate on the original teaching rather than later writings. The Theosophists were subsequently influenced by Zoroastrianism. As British influence waned in this century the Parsis were more influenced by Hindu thought. This section of the book demonstrates very well two dynamics, which holds true for the whole book. Firstly, each tradition shows a tremendous variety due to later developments. Secondly, this is so largely because of the impact other traditions had on them. In some cases certain hues of a particular tradition are virtually indistinguishable from colourings from other traditions.

The Indian articles reveal the complexity of both orthodox and non-orthodox schools, i.e. the variety of interpretation of the Vedas and the variety of schools who do not take the Vedas as authoritative. Karel Werner shows how Buddhism and Jainism came out of a long tradition of non-Vedic orthodoxy in Magadha (West Bengal/Bihar). Michael Commons does a good job of explaining the complexities of the different schools of the later Vedānta: Dvaita, Viśiṣṭadvaita and Advaita. Karl Popper's article on 'Knowledge and Reality in Indian Philosophy' is outstanding because it gives an overview of some of the main schools from the point of view of their answers to the question: Are there one, many, one and many or no ultimate cause of the bondage that is

this universe? Notice that all the main schools accepted the bondage/liberation model and all assumed that the workings of karma were the key to unravelling it. Interestingly, Popper includes some of the Buddhist positions and says that the Abhidharmists and *Vijñānavādins* held to the 'many' view, the latter because, Popper says of them, only the *experiences* of the 'illusion-like flashes' are real. In the 'no cause' camp he puts Madhyamika and Leap Advaita. Popper writes: 'As in Madhyamika, philosophers deal with *karma* by accepting it rather than trying to find a way to reject it or avoid it. Paradoxically, to accept *karma* and rebirth for what they are is to overcome them at one leap — they are only dangerous if distinguished conceptually from liberation'.

I found the Chinese section a little more pedestrian, although Whalen Lai does a good job of tracing the development of Buddhism in Chinese philosophy — how emptiness was at first understood as a Taoist 'Nothingness' or 'Non-Being' — the distinction, only found in Chinese Yogācāra Buddhism, between 'Mind Only' (Huayen and Chan) and 'Consciousness Only' (*Vijñaptimātra*) — the importance of the Lotus and Avatamsaka Sūtras in the Chinese tradition (in particular the former, which continued in Japan of course). Francis Soo's article on contemporary Buddhist philosophy sheds light on a relatively little known subject. It is well written and not merely a list of ideas and ideologies. Talking of the latter, the two articles on which Zhang Chunpo collaborates: 'Knowledge and Reality' and 'Logic and Language' are very poor indeed, firstly because they are written at a lower intellectual level than the rest of the book, and secondly, because they are little more than Maoist apologetics.

In 'The Origins of Japanese Philosophy', Brian Bocking argues that it is difficult to unravel Shintō, Buddhism and Confucianism, particularly ethically. For example, Bushidō (the Way of the Samurai) has often been portrayed as an adaptation of Zen. Bocking says that this is too simple and that Bushidō is based on Neo-Confucianism and incorporated Confucian ethics and Zen meditation techniques. Masao Abe's 'Buddhism in Japan' is a succinct account of the complexities of its subject and once again demonstrates the enormous influence of the Lotus Sūtra in the

Far East. Abe also shows how difficult it is to talk of a 'heart' of Buddhism (i.e. the Four Noble Truths) because Pure Land Buddhism is unique in its reliance on 'other power'. Abe gets to the heart of the notoriously difficult Dōgen by showing how he broke through the traditional polarities of gradual and sudden enlightenment, original and acquired Buddha nature, and practice and realisation.

The Islamic section is the one that needs the most acquaintance with Western philosophical terms. Len E. Goodman's chapter on knowledge and reality in Arabic philosophy shows why this is the case. I did not realise just how much Arabic philosophy was indebted to Aristotle and Plato, although the story is far from straightforward. Most of the other articles I found rather heavy going and not at all lucid, but again I am a relative novice on this subject. Nevertheless, despite its thrust, I found John Bousfield's chapter, 'Islamic philosophy in South and South-East Asia', better than the other articles at bringing out the different tendencies within Islam and the tensions between them.

Ninian Smart's 'The Buddha' is an excellent account of the Buddha's unorthodoxy. Smart points out that if one rejects the Vedic revelatory tradition and therefore the Sanskrit language with its everlasting and primordial character, then one can embrace a more conventionalist language and this in turn makes it easier to replace ātman with Nirvāna. Smart also claims that all later developments in Buddhism can be seen as natural apart from the celestial Buddhas that show a Hindu influence. R.R. Jackson's chapter, 'Buddhism in India', is a well written description of all the schools and some of the sub-schools of Indian Buddhism. An interesting point that Jackson makes is that although the Pudgalavādins with their theory of a transmigrating person as the bearer of different sets of aggregates were discredited, 'crypto-ātman' views continued to appear much later, e.g. the Tathāgatagarbha or the 'pure mind' of the Tantric tradition.

Chr. Lindtner's chapter on Nāgārjuna is, as we might expect from such an expert, a clear, concise and penetrating account of Nāgārjuna as a yogin and (probably) abbot, with a thorough grounding in the Abhidharma and as an orthodox Buddhist. In passing, Lindtner notes how many Western scholars have been

confused by the ambiguity between (subjective) evaluation and (objective) denotation in Western terms. For example, *dharma* can be read as 'concept' (subjective) or 'thing' (objective), *karma* as 'manner of acting' or 'action', and *prapañca* as 'linguistic concepts' or 'the world objectively displayed'. Lindtner concludes with one of the best definitions of Madhyamika I have come across: 'a special Buddhist form of moral and intellectual purification'. Donald S. Lopez, in his chapter 'Buddhism in Tibet', describes the complexities of the various schools, demonstrating just how difficult it is to stick labels on ideas. Take one of Lopez's own examples, the 'self-empty, other-empty' controversy. This is often portrayed as a simple dispute between the Madhyamika (everything is empty of self) and the Yogācāra (everything is empty of self except the non-dual highest wisdom which is empty of all extrinsic and extraneous qualities). But even the 'other-empty' thinkers look to Nāgārjuna for justification, not the works that the 'self-empty' followers applaud of course, but his more devotional corpus. Is this eternal and self-arisen highest wisdom a crypto-ātman view or is it the supreme view as taught by the Buddha in his final turning of the wheel?

For the Buddhist scholar this is an encyclopaedia definitely worth having, both for the quality of the specifically Buddhist articles but also for the articles which show how other traditions influenced Buddhism and how in turn Buddhism was influenced by them. This book demonstrates how difficult it is to talk of Buddhism or Hinduism, etc., partly because of the enormous variety and complexity of the different philosophies that underpin them.

David M. Thompson

Sexual Morality in the World's Religions. Geoffrey Parrinder. Oneworld Publications, Oxford 1996. 276 pp. £8.95/\$14.95. ISBN 1-85168-108-6.

This book was first published in 1980, and then as now the title remains misleading. The reader who expects to find a treatise on sexual ethics within these pages will be disappointed. From reading the Introduction it becomes clear that what is being offered here is not a book on sexual morality at all but a history

of sexual practices and marriage customs. A more accurate title would have been something like 'Sex and Marriage in the World's Religions'.

Indeed, it is hard to see why the word 'morality' was inserted in the title at all. Perhaps it is a hangover from an earlier period when 'morals' and 'sex' were almost synonymous. The interesting Western association of these terms is not discussed in the short four-page Introduction, although it might have been mentioned in the context of the brief discussion of the terminological drift in the term 'intercourse' in a sexual direction (p.2). The meaning of the terms 'sex' and 'religion', however, are briefly defined.

Including the Introduction, there are twelve chapters in all, with 2-5 devoted to India. Ch.2 deals with Hinduism, drawing on the Vedas and the Epics and, as may be expected, making reference to the Kāma Sūtra, Koka Śāstra and Gītā Govinda. Ch.3 deals with Buddhism, and Ch.4 with 'Other Indian Traditions', which includes the Jains, Sikhs, Parsis and Tribal religions. Ch.5 is devoted to China, Ch.6 to Japan, Ch.7 to Africa, Ch.8 to Islam, Ch.9 to the Hebrew religion, Ch.10 to Christianity, Ch.11 to Bahā'ism and Ch.12 to 'Modern Influences'.

Most of the chapters are around twenty pages in length, with the exception of the one on Christianity which is double the average, whilst that on Bahā'ism is about half. The discussion in each case follows the contours of the distinctive features of the sexual practices and traditions of each faith although, as may be imagined, frequent themes recur, such as the different roles of males and females, marriage practices, virginity, prostitution, sex in art and literature, and so forth.

Since readers of this journal will be interested primarily in Buddhism, I will henceforward confine my remarks to the chapter dealing with this topic, namely Ch.3. Entitled 'Buddhist Renunciation', it is seventeen pages long and the first four tell the story of the Buddha's birth, renunciation and enlightenment. The following section dealing with celibacy describes how early Buddhism emphasised abstinence and self-control and refers to the Buddha's well-known advice about staying alert when speaking to women. There are references to stories in the Vinaya and Jātaka which illustrate the dangers of sexual desire, and a brief reference

to contemporary Burma and Sri Lanka drawn from anthropological reports. A discussion of Tantra occupies the next five pages and then the topic changes to 'Lay Marriage and Morality'. This latter section sketches an outline of marriage customs from ancient times and mentions some of the courtesans who became followers of the Buddha, and brings the chapter to a close.

It can be seen that for anyone interested primarily in Buddhism, there is very little here that will be of interest. The chapter consists of information culled from secondary sources and there is simply insufficient space to do more than characterise the main features and attitudes of Buddhism towards sex. The reader is left with the simplistic impression that Buddhism is both puritanical and prurient, emphasising celibacy while abounding in erotic art and symbolism. This tension is not explored or explained. In fact, no really interesting or challenging issues are discussed: there is no mention of contraception, abortion, and no discussion of homosexuality. Scattered references to these topics are found in the discussion of other religions, and it is disappointing to see that the opportunity to explore these questions was not taken up in the case of Buddhism.

Of course, it would be unfair to judge this book as if it were solely about Buddhism, since the author has many other religions to survey and the chapter on Buddhism is almost certainly not the strongest. Nevertheless, one wonders about the value of this kind of project that seems to involve mainly recycling information: it tells students of Buddhism nothing new and may give an incomplete and possibly misleading impression to the non-specialist.

Damien Keown

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